A VERY FRVTFVL AND PLEASANT BOKE CALled the Instruction of a chri-sten woman, made fyrst in latyne, by the right famous clerke mayster Lewes Viues, and tourned out of latyne into Englishe by Rycharde Hyrde.

Londini.
ANNO. M.D.XLVII

TB.

THE PREFACE OF THE MOST FAMOVS CLERKE MAISTER Lodouic Viues vpon his boke called the Instruction of a Christen woman, vnto the most gracious princesse Katharine of Englande.

I HAVE BEN moued partly by the holynes and goodnes of your liuyng, partly by the fauour and loue that your grace beareth towarde holy study and learnyng, to write some thing vnto your good grace, of thynformacion and bryngyng vp of a Christen woman: A matter neuer yet entreated of any man, amonge so great plentie and varietee of wittes and writers. For Xenophon and Aristotle, geuyng rules of house kepyng, and Plato makyng preceptes of ordryng the common weale, spake many thynges appertetnyng vnto the womans office and dewtie: And saynt Cyprian, saint Hieronime, saint Ambrose, and saint Augustine, haue entreated of maides and wydowes, but in suche wyse, that they appere rather to exhorte and counsayle them vnto some kynde of lyuynge, than to instructe and teache theim. They spende all theyr speche in the laudes and prayses of chastitee, whiche is a goodly thynge and syttynge for those great witted and holy men: How be it they write but fewe preceptes and rules howe to lyue, supposyng it to be better, to exhorte them vnto the best, and helpe them vp to the hyghest, than to enforme and teache the lower thynges. But I wyll let passe all suche exhortacions, bycause euery body shall chose and pyke out the wayes of liuyng, out of these mens auctoritee, rather

than of my fantasie: and I wyl cõpyle rules of liuyng.

¶ Therfore in the fyrste boke, I wyll begynne at the begynnyng of a womans lyfe, and leade hir forth vnto the tyme of mariage. In the seconde, from mariage vnto wydowehead: howe she ought to passe the tyme of hir lyfe well and vertuously with hir husband. In the laste boke I enforme and teache the wydowhead. And bycause the matter coude not be otherwise handled, there be many thynges tolde in the fyrst boke pertaynyng vnto wyues and wydowes: and muche in the second, belongyng vnto vnmaried women: and some in the thirde pertaynyng vnto all: Lest a mayde shuld thynke, that she nede to rede but only the fyrst boke, or a wyfe the seconde, or a wydow only the third. I wyll that euery of them shall rede all. In which I haue ben more short, than many wolde I shulde haue ben. Notwithstandyng who so considereth wel the cause of myne entent, and taketh good hede, shall fynde it done not without a skyl. For in giuyng preceptes, a man ought specially to be breefe: leste he soner dull the wyttes of the reders, than teche theim, with longe bablyng. And preceptes ought to be suche, that euery body may sone can theim, and beare easily in mynde.

¶ For we shulde not be ignorant of the lawes that Christ and his disciples, Petre Paule, James, Johñ & Jude taught vs: where we maie se, that they giue vs the Deuine preceptes breefe and shortely. For who can bere in remembraunce those lawes, whiche they beare not wel in mynd, that haue spent their hole lyfe in study of them? And therfore haue I neither thrust in many examples, nor gon out of my matter to intreat generally of vice and vertu, which were a large fylde to walke in

vnto

vnto the ende that my boke myght bee, not onely redde without tedyousnes, but also be red often.

¶ Moreouer though the preceptes for men be innumerable: women yet maie be enformed with fewe wordes. For men muste be occupied bothe at home and forthe abrode, both in their owne matters & for ỹ cõmon weale. Therfore it can not be declared in few bokes but in many and longe, how thei shal handle them selfe in so many and diuers thynges. As for a woman hathe no charge to se to, but hir honestee and chastitee. Wherfore whan shee is informed of that, she is sufficiently appoynted. Wherfore theyr wyckednesse is the more cursed and detestable, that go about to perisshe that one treasure of women: as though a man had but one eye, and an other wolde go about to put it out.

¶ Some wryte fylthy and baudy rymes. Whiche men I can not se what honest excuse thei can ley for them self, but that theyr corrupt mynde and swelled with poyson, can breath none other thyng but venome, to distroy thẽ that are nere vnto it. But they call theim selfe louers: and I beleue they be so in dede, ye and blynde and mad to withal. And though thou loue, canst thou not opteine thyne owne, except thou infecte all other therfore? In my mynde, no man was euer banisshed more ryghtfully, than was Ouide, at lest wise if he was banisshed forthe writyng the crafte of loue. For other wryte wanton and noughtie balades, but this worshipfull artificer muste make rules in goddes name, and preceptes of his vnthriftynes, a schole maister of baudry, and a common corrupter of vertue.

¶ Nowe I doubt not but some wyll thynke my preceptes ouer sore and sharpe. How be it the nature of all

thynges is ſuche, that the waie of vertue is eaſye and large vnto good men, and the waie of vice contrary, ſtrayte, and roughe. But vnto yll men neyther the way that they go in, is pleaſant, nor the waie of vertue large and eaſy inough: And ſeyng it is ſo, it is better to aſſent vnto good men than yll: and rather to reken the bad folkes opinion falſe, than the good mens. Pythagoras the philoſopher, and other of his ſchole, in the diſcripcion of this letter, Y, ſay, that whā a man is paſt the fyrſt dificultee of vertue, al after is eaſy and playne. ¶Plato giueth coūſail, to choſe the beſt way in liuing, whiche way vſe and cuſtome ſhall alſo make pleſant.

Matt. 7. ¶Our lorde in the goſpell ſaythe, The waye into the kyngdome of heuen is ſtrayte, not bycauſe it is ſo in dede, but bycauſe fewe go it: except a man wolde counte his Matt. 11. wordes falſe, where he ſayth, My yocke is ſwete, and my Matt. 19. burden lyght. Or els where he promyſeth, that there is no man that forgothe any thynge for his ſake, but he ſhal haue farre more for it agayne, yea and that in this lyfe. And what was ment therby, but the pleaſures of vertue? Therfore I ſe, vnto whom my preceptes ſhall ſeme rigorous and ſharpe, that is yonge men, that be ignorant, wanton, and vnthrifty: whiche can not ones beare the ſyghte of a good woman. And lyke as ranke horſes ney vnto euery mare, ſo they go aboute euery tryflynge and peuyſhe wenche, that hath a pleaſure to be lorded vpon and loued, and they wold haue their folly to be alowable by the multitude of myſdoers. As who ſayth, the agrement and abuſion of people myght chaunge the nature of thynges.

¶It is no newes, that yll folke hate them that aduyſe them well. For Theophraſt whan he wrote of this ſame matter

matter, and spake moche of martage sadly and wysely, he sette commen harlottes in his toppe. And one Leoncium, the concubyne of Metrodorus, started out, and babled fourth a boke without all reason, or shame, agaynste that man moste excellent in wysedome and eloquence: which dede was thought so intollerable, that as though no more hope of goodnes were left, ther rose vp a prouerbe of that matter, that the next remedy was to seke a tre to go hang vpon.

¶ Saynt Hierome wryteth of hym selfe vnto the holy mayd Demetrias in this wyse: More thã. xxx. yere a go I wrote a boke of virginitie, in the which I must nedes speke against vice, and patefy the trappes of the deuyl, for the instruccion of the maid that I taught: the which wrytyng many be agreued withal, whan euery one taketh ꝑ matter, as said by him self, and wyl not here me, as an exhortour and councellour: but lotheth me, as an accuser and rebuker of his doyng. This saith he.

¶ Lo what maner of men we shall displease with teachyng them vertuously: veryly suche as were a shame and rebuke to please: but sad men, chast maydes, vertuous wyues, wyse wydowes, and fynally all that are true chriſten people, not onely in name but also in dede and with their hertes, will stande on our parte, whiche knowe and agree all in this, that nothyng can be more mylde and gentyl than the preceptes of our faith. From the which Christe graunt vs neuer to declyne our mind and purpose one heares bredthe.

¶ I haue put in remembrance of their duetye the good and holy women but sleyghtly, other nowe and than I take vp sharply: bycause I sawe that only teaching auayleth but a lytle, vnto those that struggle with the

leader.

leader, and must be drawen. Therfore haue I spoken somtyme the more playnly: that they myght se the filthynes of theyr condicions, as it were peincted in a table, to thentent that they shuld be ashamed, and at last leaue theyr shamefull dedes. And also that good women shuld be gladder to se them self out of those vices, and labour more to be furder from them, and to entre in to the abitacle of vertue. For I had leauer (as saint Hieronyme counsayleth) aduenture my shamefastnes a lyttell whyle, than leoperde my matter: so yet that I wolde not fall in any vnclenlynes, whiche were the grettest shame that can be, for hym that shuld be a maister of chastitie. Wherfore often tymes the reder muste vnderstand more in sentence than I speke in wordes.

¶ And this work most excellent & gracious princes, I offer vnto you in like maner, as if a peinter wold bring vnto you your owne vysage and image, mooste counnyngely peynted. For lyke as in that purtrature you myght se your bodily similitude: so in these bokes shal you se the resemblaunce of your mynde and goodnes: bycause that you haue bene bothe mayde, wyfe, and wydowe. And so you haue handled your selfe in all the ordre and course of your lyfe, that what so euer you dyd, myght be an example vnto other to lyue after. But you had leuer ỹ vertues to be praised thã your self. How be it no man can praise the vertues of women, but he must nedes cõprehend you in the same praise. How be it your mynd ought to be obeied. Therfore you shal vnderstãd ỹ many like vnto you be praised here by name expresseli but your self spokẽ of cõtinually though you be not named. For vertues can neuer be praised, but thei must nedes be preised with al, ỹ be excellent in thẽ, though their

name

name be not spoke of. also your dereſt daughter Mary ſhal rede theſe inſtruciõs of myne, and kolow in liuing, whiche ſhe muſt nedes do if ſhe ozder hir ſelfe after the example that ſhe hath at home with hir of your vertue and wyſedome. Noz there is no doubt, but ſhe wyll do after them, and except ſhe alone of all other, diſapoynt and begyle euery mannes opinion, ſhe muſt nedes bee both very good and holy, that is come of yõu and noble kyng Henry the. viii. ſuche a couple of mates: that your honour and vertue paſſe all craftes of prayſyng. Therfoze all other women ſhall haue an exaumple of your lyfe and dedes: and by theſe bokes that I haue dedicated vnto your name, they ſhall haue rules and preceptes to lyue by, and ſo ſhal they be bounden vnto your goodnes, bothe foz that, whiche it ſelfe hath done in gyuyng exaumple, and that it hath ben thoccaſion of my wrytyng. And ſo I pray god geue your good grace longe well to fare. At Bruges the yere of our lozde god. M. D. and. xxiii. the fyfte day of Apzile.

THE TABLE.

Of the first boke.

If the bringyng vp of a mayd whan she is a babe. Cap.i. fo.1.
Of the residue of hir infancy. Cap.ii. fo.2.
Of hir exercise. Cap. iii. fo.eod.
Of the lernyng of maides. Cap. iiii. fo. 5.
What bokes be to be red, and what not. Cap. v. fo.9
Of virginitee. Cap. vi. fo.13.
Of the keping of virginitee and castite. Cap. vii. fo.15.
Of the ordring of the body in a virgin. Cap. viii. fo.18.
Of the raymentes. Cap.ix. fo.22.
Of the liuyng alone of a virgin. Cap.x. fo.28.
Of the vertues of a woman, and examples that she shulde folowe. Cap.xi. fo.32.
Howe the mayde shall behaue hir selfe foz the abzode. Cap. xii. fo.38.
Of daunsyng. Cap. xiii. fo.46.
Of louyng. Cap. xiiii. fo. 48.
Howe a mayden ought to loue. Cap.xv. fo.53.
How the mayd shall seke an husband. Cap.xvi. fo.54.

The second boke.

Of wedlocke. Cap.i. fo.61.
What a woman ought to haue in mynd whan she mazeth. Cap.ii. fo.62.
Of two the greatteste poyntes in a maried woman Cap. iii. fo.64.
Howe she shall behaue hir selfe vnto hir housbande. Cap.iiii. fo. 68.

Of the

Of the concorde of maried couples. Cap.v. fo.82
How she shuld lyue betwene hir husband and hir selfe
priuatly. Cap.vi. fo.89.
Of ielosy. Cap.vii. fo.92.
Of raymentes. Cap. viii. fo.96.
Of walkyng abrode. Cap.ix. fo.98.
What the wyfe ought to do at home. Cap.x. fo.103.
Of chyldrenne, and the charge and care about theym
Cap.xi. fo.109.
Of twyse maried women, and of steppe mothers.
Cap.xii. fo.120.
Howe she shall behaue hir selfe with hir kynsefolkes
and alyaunce. Cap. xiii. fo.122.
Howe she shall lyue with hir son or hir daughter mari-
ed, & how with hir son in lawe and daughter in lawe.
Cap. xiiii. fo.124.
Of a wyfe well worne in age. Cap. xv. fo.125.

The thyrde boke.

Of the mournyng of widowes. Cap.i. fo.126.
Of the burieng of hir husbande. Cap.ii. fo.130.
Of the myndyng of hir husband. Cap.iii. fo.132.
Of chastitee and honestie of a widow. Cap.iiii. fo.end.
How they shall vse them selfe at home. Cap. v. fo.135.
How they shall behaue them selfe forth. Cap.vi. fo.136.
Of seconde mariages. Cap.vii. fo.138.

FINIS TABVLAE.

L. CRECI ROMANI
AS
THOM
BERTHELETVS

THE FIRST BOKE OF THE INSRVCTION OF A CHRISTEN VVOMAN.

Of the bringyng vp of a maide whan she is a babe. The first chapter.

FABIVS Quintilian in his boke, where he doth instruct and teache an oratour, wylleth his begynnyng and entrance to be taken from the cradel, and no tyme to be slacked vnaplied towarde thende and purpose of the facultee entended: Nowe muche more dylygence ought to be geuen in a Christen virgine, that we may bothe enfourme hir encreace, and ordre it and hir instruction and entringe, and that by and by from the mylke: whiche I wolde if it were possible, shuld be the mothers. And the same counsayle giueth Plutarche and Phauorine, and many other of the wyseste and greatteste philosophers. For by that meanes the loue shall be the more betwene the mother and the daughter, whan none of the mothers name shalbe take from hir and put vnto any other. For nurces be wont also to be called mothers. And the mother mai more truly reken hir daughter hir own, whom she hathe not only borne in hir wombe and brought in to the world, but also hath caried styl in hir armes of a babe, vnto whom she hath gyuen tete, whom she hath nourished with hir owne bloud, whose lepes she hath cherysched in hir lap, and hath cherfully accepted & kissed the first laughes, & first hath toikully herde the stamaring of it, couetyng to speke, and hath holden harde to hir brest prayenge it

good lucke and fortune. These thinges shall cause and engendre such reuerent and inwarde loue in the doughter towarde the mother agayne, that she shall be far more loued and sette by of hir doughter, bycause of the loue that she hath so abundantly conceyued toward hir in grene and tender age. Who can nowe expresse, what charite these thinges encreace among folke, whan wild beastes that haue no knowlage nor percepuynge what loue meaneth, yet loue their norishers and bringers vp, nor shon the daũgers of deth to defend and saue theme More ouer I wote not howe, but so it is, that we sucke out of our mothers teate togither with the milk not only loue but also condicions & dispositions. And that is the cause saith the philosopher Phauorine, that maketh men to maruayle why they se many children, comen of chast and good women, nothyng like their parentes, neyther in mynd nor body. For the comon saiyng come vp of nought, which is not vnknowē not vnto childrē, They that haue ben nurced with sowes milke haue rolled in the mier. For that cause the wise man Chrisippus bad chose the wysest and best nurces. Whiche precepte I my selfe will ensue and counsaile the mothers, that maie not norishe their children with their owne milk, to do likewise. Neyther I wyll so great diligence to be geuen in seking a nurce for a boy, as for a maide. Quintilian thought it sufficient to command, that the nurces shulde not be foule and rude spoken, because the waies and maner of speakyng taken in youth, wold be harde to get away. As for their maners he cared not so greatly, which the man child doth ofter lerne from home thā at whome. And yet he doth allege the opinion of Chrisippus as though he allowed the same. But the maide,

whom

whom we wold haue specially good, requireth al intendance both of father and mother, lest any spot of vice or vnclenlynes shulde stycke on hir: Let hir take no such thynges, neither by hir bodily senses and wittes, nor by hir norisshyng and bringyng vp. She shall firste here hir nurce, first se hir, and what so euer she lerneth in rude and ignorant age, that wyll she euer labour to counterfete and folowe cunnynglye. Therfore saincte Hieronyme, whan he did teach the doughter of Leta, he warned, that the nurce shuld be no drunkard, nor wanton, nor full of talke and chattyng.

Of the residue of hir infancie. Cap. ii.

AFTER that she is ones weaned and beginneth to speake and go, let al hir play and pastime be with maides of hir owne age, and within the presence either of hir mother or of hir nurce, or some other honest woman of sad age, that maie rule and measure the playes and pastimes of hir mynd, and set them to honestie and vertue. Auoyde all mannes kyn away from hir, nor let hir not lerne to delyte among men. For naturally our loue continueth the longest towarde them, with whom we haue passed our time in youthe. Whiche affection of loue is the most stronge with women, because they be more disposed to pleasure and daliaunce. Nowe in that age, whiche can not yet discerne good from badde, they shulde be taught none yuell. And it is an vngracious opinion of them that say, thei wil haue their children to knowe bothe good and yuel. For by that meanes they say, they shal the better flee vice and folow vertue. But it were more suerty, and more profitable, & therto more happy, not only to do none il, but also not ones to know

it. For who hath not herd, that we were cast into misery that selfe houre that the fyrste ancestryes of mankynde knewe what was good and what was badde: And verely, fathers that wyl not haue their childzen vnexpert and ignozant of euil, be wozthy that their childzē shuld know both good and yl: And whan they repent them of their yuell doynge, shulde cal yet vnto remembzauuce, that they lecned to do yuell by their fathers mynde and wyl. Let the maide lerne none vnclenly wozdes, oz wanton, oz vncomly gesture and mouing of the body, not so much as than whan she is yet ignozant what she doth, and innocent. For she shall dooe the same, whan she is growen bigger and of moze discrecion: and it chanceth vnto many, that what thyng so euer they haue been accustomed in befoze, they do the same afterwarde at vnwares and vnauisedly. And often tymes suche braydes come vpon them against their wyll. And the wozse they be, the oftener they do them. For folkes myndes beate them better away. Lette the father and mother be well ware, that they allowe none vncomely dede of hir, neyther by wozdes, laughynge, noz countenance, neyther kysse and enbzace hir therfoze: which is the foulest dede of all. For the mayde wyll labour to reherse often that, which she thinkethe shall please best hir father and mother. Let all hir bzinging vp be pure and chast the first yeres, because of hir maners, whiche take their fyrst furnynge of that custome in youthe and infancy.

Of hir exercyse. Cap. iii.

VVHAN she is of age able to lerne any thing, let hir begynne with that, which parteyneth vnto the ornament of hir soule, and the keping and ordzing of an

house.

house. Howe be it I appoint no time to begyn. Some reken best to begyn at the seuenthe yere: in whiche opinion are Aristotel, Eratosthenes, & Chrisippus Quintilian wolde begynne at the fourthe or fyft yere. But I put al the ordryng of this matter in the discretion of the fathers and mothers: which may take aduysement after the qualities and complexcions of the childe, so they be not letted with inordinate affection: by reason wherof some set so much by their children, and care soo sore for them, that thei kepe them from al labour, lest thei should fal in to any syckenes. So whan they wene to encrease and strength their bodies, they bruse and weaken them The cherysshinge and sufferance of the fathers and mothers hurteth muche the chyldren, that geueth theim an vnbrydled libertie vnto vyce infinite, and specyally the maydes. But these be refrayned and holden vnder, for the most part by feare: whiche if it lacke, than hath she al the brydell of nature at large, and renneth headling vnto myschiefe, and drowneth hir selfe therin: and cometh not lightly to any goodnes, without she be of nature such as we mai se some. Thet fore let hir both lerne hir boke, and beside that to handle woll & flaxe: which ar two crafftes, yet left of that old innocent world, both profytable and kepers of temperance, which thing specially women ought to haue in price. I wyll medle here with no low matters, lest I should seme to make much a do about things that be to simple for my purpose. But I wolde in no wise that a woman shulde be ignorant in those feates, that must be done by hand, no not though she be a princesse or a quene. For what cā she do better or ought to do rather, what time she hath ryd hir busines in hir house: Shuld she talk with men or other women:

And what shal she stil talke of? Shall she neuer holde hir peace? Or shal she syt and muse? what I pray youe womans thought is swyfte, and for the most part vnstable, walking and wandering out from home, & sone wyl slide, by the reason of it owne slipernes, I wote not how far. Therfore reding were the best, & therunto I geue them counsaile specially. But yet whan she is wery of reding, I can not se hir idel, as it were the women of Perseland, drowned in volupties and plesures, sitting amonge the company of gelded men, singyng and banketyng continually, whiche pleasures were oft changed and renewed to eschewe tedyousnes, and thend of one pleasure was the beginning of an other folowing. Saynt Hieronyme wold haue Paula to handle wolle, that most noble woman comen of the bloud of Scipio and Gracchus, whiche was also descended of the linage of kyng Agamemnon the prince of all kynges, and to lerne to dresse it, and to hold and occupie a rock, with a wolle basket in hir lap, and turne the spindel, and draw forth the thred with hir owne fingers. And Demetrias, whiche was as great of birth, as mighty of possessions as she, he bad haue wolle in hir handes, and hir selfe either to spin, to warpe, or els wynd spindels in a case, for to throw woke of, & to wynd on clewes the spinning of others, and to ordre such as shuld be wouen. For the dressyng of wolle hath ben euer a honest occupacion for a good waman. In Rome all maydes, whan thei were fyrste maried, brought vnto theyr husbandes house distaffe and spindel with wolle, and wiped, striked, and garnisshed the postes with wolle. whiche thyng was a great ceremony with them. And after she shuld be made syt on a felle with wolle, that she myght lerne, what she ought

ought to do at home. Than after warde she shulde saie these wordes vnto hir husband, where as thou art Caius, there am I Caia. Nowe was this Caia Tanaquil an Etruscian borne, a very noble waman and a sad, wyfe vnto kyng Tarquin Priscus. Which Caia Tanaquil vsed al hir labour in woll. Therfore after hir deth she was worshipped for a goddes, and hir image set vp with a rocke, as a token and a signe of chastitee and labour. Also there was a custome to cry at ỳ wedding of tentimes, Thalassio, Thalassio, that is as ye wold say, The wol basket, The wol basket. To thentent the new maried wife shuld remẽbre, what she shuld haue to do. Therfore it was reckened a sygne of a wise and a chaste woman to do that businesse. The kynges son of Rome, and noble yong men of the kynges bloude, whan they fel at argument about their wyues, and came sodainly home to Rome, they found other of the kynges daughters in lawe amonge their companions and mates making good chere. But they founde Lucrecia sittynge at hir wolle, vntyll late in the nyght, and hir maydes, busy about hir, in hir owne house: Than all they by one assent gaue hir the pryce of goodnes and chastitee. What tyme al the empire & dominion of Rome was in Augustus handes, yet he set his daughters & his nices to worke vpon wol. Like wise Terence, where he doth describe a sobre and a chast yonge waman, sayth: Gettyng hir liuyng by wolle and webbe. And Salomon, where he dothe spoke of the praise of an honye woman, sayth. She sought for wolle and flaxe, and wrought by the counsaile of hir handes. Nor it maketh no force, after my mynd, whether it be wolle or flaxe, for bothe pertayne vnto the necessary vses of our lyfe, and be honest occupa-

occupacions for women. Anna, mother vnto Samuel the prophet, made with hir owne handes a lynen rochet for hir sonne. The most chast quene of Ithace Penelope passed the.xx. yeres that hir husband was away, with weauynge. Quenes of Macidony and Eppre weaued garmentes with their owne handes, for their husbãdes and bretherne, and fathers, and children: of whiche maner garmentes, kyng Alexander shewed some vnto the quenes of Perse lande, that his mother and sisters had made. Writers of histories make mencion, that in old tyme there was wont in Spayne, great wagers to be layde, who shulde spyn, or weaue most, and tymes were apoynted to bringe forthe theyr worke to shewe it, and geue iugement of it. And great honour and preyse was geuen vnto them, that laboured most and diligentliest. And yet vnto this day remayneth the same mynde and loue of sobre sadnes in many, and thapplynge of their worke is bosted and talked of. And among al good women it is a great shame to be idel. Therfore quene Isabel, kyng Fardinandos wyfe, taught hir doughters to spyn, sow, & peint: of whom two were quenes of Portugal, the third of Spayn mother vnto Carolus Cesar. And the fourth the most holy and deuout wife vnto the most noble prince Arthure, brother vnto our most gracious souerayne lorde kyng HENRI the, VIII. Let the maid also lerne cokery not that slubbering and excesse in meates to serue a great meny, ful of delicious pleasures and glotony, which cokes medle with, but sobre & measurable, that she may lerne to dresse meate for hir father, and mother, and bretherne, whyle she is a maide: and for hir husband and children, whan she is a wife: and so shal she gette hir great thanke bothe of the

one

one and thother, whan she dothe not laye all the labour vpon the seruantes. But hir selfe prepare such thynges as shalbe more pleasant vnto hir father and mother, bre therne, and husband, and childzen, than if they were dzes sed by seruauntes. And that the more pleasaunt, if they were sicke. Noz let no body lothe the name of the kechin, namely beyng a thing very necessary, without the which neither sicke folkes can amēd, noz hole folkes lyue. The whiche occupacion Achilles bothe a kyng and a kynges son, and a lozde most noble, dyd not disdayne to do. Foz what time Ulisses and Nestoz came to hym, foz agremēt betwene hym and Agamemnon, he layd the tables hym selfe, and tucked vs his clothes, & went in to the kechin, and prepared theyz meate, to make the noble princes sobze and temperate chere, whom he loued so wel. Also it is a thyng parteinyng vnto temperaunce and honestie, foz whan the maistres oz hir daughter is by, all thyng is done the more diligently. What deintenes of hande is that, and what lothyng of the kechin, that they maie not abyde to handle oz se that whiche their father oz mother, oz husband, oz brother, oz elles their child must eate. Let them that dooe so, vnderstand, that they betray and fyle their handes more whan they lay them on an other man, than their owne husband, than though they babled and blacked them i sout. And that it is more shame to be sene in a daunce than in the kechyn, and to handle wel tables and cardes than meate. And worse becometh a good woman to tast a cuppe of dzynke in a feast oz a banket, reached vnto hir by an other man, than to taste a suppyng in the kechin to geue hir husbād. Therfoze by my counsayle a woman shall lerne this crafte, that she may in euery tyme of hir lyfe please hir frendes, and that the

meate mai come moze clenly vnto the table. I haue sene in Spain and in France, ỹ haue mended of their sicknes by meates dzessed of their wiues, doughters, oz doughters in lawe, and haue euer after loued theim farre the better foz it. And againe I haue sene, that haue ben hated, as doughter of the father, and doughter in lawe of the father in lawe, and wyfe of hir husbande, because they haue saied, they coude not skele of coquery.

¶ Of the learnyng of maydes. Cap. iiii.

OF MAIDES some be but littel mete foz learning, Lyke wyse as some men be vnapt: againe some be euen bozne vnto it, oz at leste not vnfete foz it. Therfoze thei that be dulle are not to be discozaged, and those that be apt, shuld be herted and enconraged. I perceiue that learned women be suspected of many: as who saieth, the subtilitee of learning shuld be a nozishement foz the maliciousnes of their nature. Verely I do not alowe in a subtil and a crafty woman suche lerning, as shuld teach hir disceite, and teach hir no good maners and vertues: Not withstanding the pzeceptes of liuing, and the examples of those that haue liued well, and had knowlage to gether of holines, be the kepers of chastitee & purenes, and the copies of vertues, and pzyckes to pzicke and to moue folkes to continue in them. Aristotel asketh a questiō, Why trompettes and minstrelles, that play at festis foz wāgis and resoztynges and gatherynges of people, whom the grekes cal in their language, as ye wold say, Bacchus seruantes, be euer geuen vnto pleasures, and no goodnesse at all, but spend out their thzifte, and their lyfe in naughtynes. He maketh answere hym selfe, that it is so, because they be euer among volupties and pleasures,

ſures and banketting, nor here any time the preceptes of good liuing, nor regarde any man that liueth wel, and therefore they can lyue none other wiſe, than they haue learned, either by ſeyng or heryng. Now haue thei herd, nor ſene, neither vſed any thing, but pleaſure and beaſtlines, amonge vncomely cryng and ſhouttyng, amonge dauncers and kiſſers, laughers and eaters, dronkerdes and ſpewers, amonge folke drowned in excedyng ouermuche ioye and gladnes, all care and minde of goodnes laid apart. Therfore muſt thei nedes ſhew ſuch thinges in their condictons all their life. But you ſhall not lightly fynde an yll woman, excepte it be ſuche one, as either knoweth not, or at leſt way cõſidereth not what chaſtitee and honeſty is worth, nor ſeeth what miſchiefe ſhe doth, whã ſhe forgoeth it, nor regardeth how great a treaſure, for how fowle, for how lyght, and trãſitory an image of pleaſure ſhe changeth, what a ſort of vngraciouſneſſes ſhe letteth in, what tyme ſhe ſhutteth forth chaſtitee, nor ponderyth what bodily pleaſure is, howe vaine & folyſhe a thing, whiche is not worthe the turnyng of an hande, not onely vnworthy, wherfore ſhe ſhulde caſt awaie that which is moſt goodly treaſure, that a woman can haue. And ſhe that hath learned in bokes to caſt this and ſuch other thynges, and hath furniſhed and fenſed hir minde with holy counſailes, ſhall neuer find to do any vilany. For if ſhe can finde in hir herte to do naughtily, hauyng ſo many preceptes of vertue to kepe hir, what ſhulde we ſuppoſe ſhe ſhuld do, hauig no knowlage of goodnes at al: and truly if we wold cal the old world to remembrãce, and reherſe their tyme, we ſhall finde no learned woman that euer was yll, where I coude bryng forth an hundred good, as Cornelia the mother of Gracchus, whiche

was an example of al goodnes and chastitie, and taught hir children hir owne selfe. And Portia the wife of Brutus, that toke of hir fathers wysedome. And Cleobula daughter of Cleobulus, one of the .vii. wyse men, whiche Cleobula was so geuen vnto lernyng and philosophie, that she clerely despised al pleasure of the body, and liued perpetually a mayde, at whome the daughter of Pythagoras the philosopher toke example, whiche after hir fathers death was the ruler of his schole, and was made the maistres of the college of virgins. Also Theaneo, one of the same sect and schole, doughter vnto Metapõtus, whiche had also the gift of prophesy, was a woman of singular chastitee. And saint Hieronime saith, that ỹ .x. Sibilles were virgins. Also Cassandra, and prophetes of Appollo, and Juno at Crissa, were virgins. And that was a common thing, as we rede, that those women that were prophetes, were virgins eke. And she ỹ aunswered suche as came to aske any thyng of Apollo in Delphis, was euer a virgine, of whom the firste was Phemone, whiche first found verse roial. Also Sulpitia wyfe vnto Caleno, lefte behynde hir holy preceptes of matrimony, that she had vsed in hir liuyng hir selfe, of whom the poet Martiall writeth on this wise.

Redeth Sulpitia all yonge women,
That cast your mynde to please one man.
Redeth Sulpitia also all men
That dooe entende to please one woman.
Of honest and vertuous loue doth she tell,
Chast pastymes, plaies, and pleasure,
Whose bokes who so considereth well,
Shall saie there is none holyer.

And it is plainely knowen, that no man in that tyme was

was more happy of his wyfe than was Caleno of Sulpitia. Hortẽtia the douhter of Hortentius the oratour, dyd so resemble hir fathers eloquence, that she made an oracion vnto the iudges of the citie for the women, which oraciõ the successours of that tyme dyd rede, not only as a laude and praise of womẽs eloquence, but also to lerne cunnyng of it, as well as of Cicero or Demosthenes oracions. Edesia of the citie of Alexandre, kinswoman vnto Sirian the philosopher, was of so great learnyng and vertuous disposicion, that she was a wounder vnto all the worlde in hir tyme. Corinna Theia a vertuous woman ouer came the poete Pinder. v. tymes in verses. Paula the wyfe of Senec, enfourmed with the doctrine of hir husband, folowed also hir husband in condicions. And Senec hym selfe maketh sorowe, that his mother was not wel lerned in the preceptes of wyse men, whiche she had ben entred in at hir husbandes commaundment. Argentaria Polla, wyfe vnto the poet Lucan, whiche after hir husoandes death corrected his bokes, and it is saied, that she helped hym with the makyng, was a noble woman of birth, ryche, and excellent of beautie, and wyt, and chastitee, of whom Calliope in Statius, speaketh thus vnto Lucan,

I shall not geue the onely excellence in makyng,
But also bynde in mariage the vnto
One mete for thy wytte and great counnyng,
Suche as Uenus wold gyue, or the goddesse Iuno
In beaute, symplicitee, and gentilnes
In byrthe, grace, fauour, and riches.

Also Diodorus the logician had. v. doughters excellent in lernyng and chastitee: of whom Philo, maister vnto Carneades, writeth the history. Zenobia the queene of

Palmyra, was learned bothe in latine and greke, and wrote an historie, of whome, with other mo in the nexte boke, I shall tel the meruailous chastitee. I nede not to reherse the Christen women, as Tecla disciple of Paule, a scholer mete for suche a noble maister, and Caterine of Alexandria, doughter vnto Costus, whiche ouercame in disputacions the greattest and moste exercised philosophers. There was one of the same name Catharine Senensis, a wondrous counnyng mayde, whiche hath lefte behynde hir exaumples of hir witte: in the whiche doth appere the purenes of hir moste holy mynde. Nor we nede not to enuy the pagans for their poetis, whiche haue in one house foure maydes all poetis, the doughters of Philip. And in sainct Hieronimes tyme all holy women were very well learned. Wolde god that now a daies, many olde men were able to bee compared vnto theim in counnyng. Saincte Hieronime wryteth vnto Paula, Leta, Eustachium, Fabiola, Marcella, Furia, Demetrias, Salma, and Hierontia: Sainct Ambrose vnto other: Sainct Augustine vnto other, and all meruailous witted, well learned, and holy. Valeria Proba, whiche loued hir husbande syngularly well, made the lyfe of our lorde Christe out of Virgils verses. Writers of Cronicles saie, that Theodosia, doughter vnto Theodosius the ponger, was as noble by hir learning and vertue, as by hir Empire, and the makynges that be taken oat of Homer, named Centones, be called hers. I haue red epistoles and counning workes of Hildegard, a mayde of Almayne. There hath ben seene in our time the foure doughters of quene Isabel, of whom I spake a liteli before, that were well learned all. It is tolde me with great praise and meruaile in many places of this coun-

countrey, that dame Joanne, the wife of kyng Philippe, mother vnto Carolus that now is, was wonte to make answere in latine, and that without any study, vnto the oracions that were made after the custome in townes, vnto newe princes. The same saith euery body by the other .ii. systers, which be dead in Portugal. Then whiche iiii. systers there were no quenes by any mannes remembraunce more chaste of body thanne they, none of better name, none better loued of their subiectes, nor more fauored, nor better loued their husbandes, none that more lowely dyd obey theim, nor that kepte bothe theim and all theirs, better without spotte of vilany, there were none that more hated filthynes and wantonnes, none that euer dyd more perfectly fulfyll all the poyntes of a good woman.

¶ Nowe if a man maie be suffered amonge queenes to speke of more meane folkes, I wold reken amonge this sort the daughters of S. T. M. kn. M. E. and C, & with them their kynnes woman M. G. whome their father not content onely to haue thē good and very chast, wold also they shuld be well learned, supposyng, that by that meane they shuld be more truely and surely chast. Wher in neyther that great wise man is disceiued, nor none other that are of the same opinion. For the study of learning is such a thing, that it occupieth ones minde holly, and lifteth it vp vnto the knowlage of most goodly matters, and plucketh it from the remembrance of such thinges as be foule. and if any such thought come in to their mynde, either the minde, well fortifyed with the preceptes of good lyuing, auoydeth theim awaie, or els it geueth none hede vnto those thynges that be vyle & foule, whan it hath other most goodly and pure plesure, where

with

with it is delyted. And therfore I suppose that Pallas the goddes of wisedome and cunnyng, and all the Muses, were feigned in olde tyme to be virgyns. And the mynde, set vpon lernyng and wysedome, shall not only abhorre from foule lust, that is to saie the moste whyte thyng from sout, and the moste pure from spottes: But also they shall leaue all suche lyght and trifling pleasures, wherin the lyght fantasies of maides haue delite, as songes, daunces, and suche other wanton and pyuisshe plaies A woman saythe Plutarche, geuen vnto lernyng, wyll neuer delyte in daunsyng. But here paraventure a man wolde aske, what lernyng a woman shuld be set vnto, and what shall she study: I haue tolde you. The study of wisedom, the which doth enstruct their maners, and enfourme their liuyng, and teacheth them the waie of good and holy lyfe. As for eloquence I haue no great care, nor a woman nedeth it not, but she nedeth goodnes and wisedome. Nor it is no shame for a woman to holde hir peace, but it is shame for hir and abominable to lack discrecion, and to liue yl. Nor I wyl not here condempne eloquence, which both Quintilian, and sainct Hieronime folowyng hym, say, was praysed in Cornelia the mother of Gracchus, and in Hortentia the doughter of Hortentius. If there maie be founde any holy and wel learned woman, I had leauer haue hir to teach them. If there be none, let vs chose some man either well aged, or els very good and vertuous, which hathe a wyfe, and that right fayre ynough, whome he loueth well, and so shall he not desyre other. For these thynges ought to be sene vnto, for as much as chastitee in bringyng vp a woman requireth the most dilygence, and in a maner all to gether. Whan she shalbe taught to rede, let those bokes be taken

in

in hande, that maie teache good maners. And whan she shall learne to write, let not hir example be voyd verses, nor wanton or triflynge songes, but some sad sentence, prudente and chaste, taken out of holy scripture, or the saiynges of philosophers, whiche by often writyng she maie fasten better in hir memory. And in learning, as I poynte none ende to the manne, no more I dooe to the woman: sauyng it is mete that the man haue knowlage of many and diuers thinges, that maie both profite him selfe & the cōmon welthe, bothe with the vse and encreasyng of learning. But I wold the woman shuld be al together in that parte of philosophy, that taketh vpon it to enfourme, and teache, and amende the condicions. Finally lette hir learne for hir selfe alone and hir yonge childrene, or hir systers in our lorde. For it neyther becometh a woman to rule a schoole, nor to lyue amonge men, or speke abrode, and shake of hir demurenes and honestee, either all together or els a great parte: whiche if she bee good, it were better to bee at whome within and vnknowē to other folkes. And in company to holde hir tonge demurely. And let fewe se hir, and none at all here hir. The apostle Paule the vessell of election, enfourmyng and teachynge the churche of the Corinthis with holy preceptes, saithe: Lette your women holde their tonges in congregacions, nor they be not allowed to speake, but to be subiecte as the lawe biddeth. If they wolde learne any thing, let theim aske their husbandes at home. And vnto his disciple Timothe, he writethe on this wyse: Let a woman learne in silence with a subiection. But I geue no lycence to a woman to bee a techer, nor to haue aucthoritee of the man, but to be in silence. For Adam was the fyrst made, and after Eue, and

1.Cor.14.

1.Ti.2.

Gen.&c.

Adam was not betraied, the woman was betraied into the breche of the commaundement. Therfore because a woman is a fraple thyng, and of weake discreacion, and that maie lyghtly be disceiued, whiche thyng our fyrste mother Eue sheweth, whome the dyuell caught with a lyght argument. Therfore a woman shulde not teache, leaste whan she hath taken a false opinion and beleue of any thyng, she spred it in to the hearers, by the auctoritee of maistershyp, and lyghtly brynge other in to the same errour: for the learners commonly doo after the teacher with good wyll.

¶ What bokes be to be redde, and what not. Cap. v.

SAYNT Hieronyme writyng vnto Leta of the teachyng of Paula, commaundeth thus: Let hir learne to heare nothyng, nor speake, but it that perteineth vnto the feare of god. Nor there is no doubt, but he will counsaile the same of reading. There is an vse nowe a daies, worse than amonge the pagans, that bokes written in our mothers tonges, that be made but for idel men and women to reade, haue none other matter but of war and loue: of the whiche bokes I thinke it shall not nede to geue any preceptes. If I speake vnto Christen folkes, what nede I to tell what a mischiefe is towarde, whan strawe and dry woode is cast into the fyre? Yea but these be written saie they, for idell folke, as thoughe idelnes were not a vice great enough of it self, without fire brondes be put vnto it, wherwith the fyre maie catche a man all together, and more hote. What shoulde a maide do with armoure? whiche ones to name were a shame for hir. I haue heard tell, that in some places gentilwomen behold meruailous busily the plaies and iustinges

of

of armed men, and geue sentence and iudgement of thē: and that the men feare and set moze by their iudgementes than the mens. It can not lyghtly bee a chaste maide, that is occupied with thinkyng on armour, and turney, and mans valiaunce. What places amonge these be foz chastitee vnarmed and weake? A womā that vseth those feates, drinketh poyson in hir hert, of whome this care and these woordes bee the playne saieynges: This is a deadly sickenes, noz yet oughte to be shewed of me, but to be couered and holden vnder, leaste it hurt other with the smel, and defile theim with the infection. Therfoze whan I can not tell, whether it bee mete foz a Chzisten man to handle armour, howe shulde it be leafull foz a woman to loke vpon theim, yea thoughe she handle theim not, yet to bee couuersant amonge theim with herte and mynde, whiche is wozse? Moze ouer, wherto readest thou other mennes loue and glosynge woordes, and by littell and littell drinkest the enticementes of the poysō vnknowing, and many times ware and wittyngly? Foz many, in whom ther is no good mynde al redy, reden those bokes, to kepe thē selfe in the thoughtes of loue. It were better foz them not only to haue no learning at all, but also to lese theyz eies, that thei shuld not reade, and theyz eares, that they shuld not here. Foz as our lozde saith in the gospel: It were better foz them to go blind and deffe into life, than with .ii. eies to be cast into hell. This mayde is so vile vnto Chzisten folkes, that she is abominable vnto pagans, wherfoze I wonder of the holy pzeachers, that whan they make great a do about many small matters, many times, they cry not out on this in euery sermone. I meruayle, that wyse fathers will suffre their doughters, oz that husbandes Mat. 18.

will ſuffre their wyues, or that the maners and cuſtomes of people will diſſemble and ouerloke, that women ſhall vſe to reade wantonnes. It were ſyttynge, that common lawes and officers ſhulde not onely loke vpon the courtes and matters of ſute, but alſo mattiers bothe commune and priuate. Therfore it were conuenient by a commune law to put awaie foule rebaudy ſonges, out of the peoples mouthes, whiche bee ſo vſed as thoughe nothyng ought to be ſongen in the citee, but foule and fylthy ſonges, that no good manne can heare withoute ſhame, nor no wyſe man without dyſpleaſure. They that made ſuche ſonges, ſeeme to haue none other purpoſe, but to corrupte the maners of younge folkes, and they dooe none other wyſe, than they that infecte the common welles with poyſon. What a cuſtome is this, that a ſonge ſhall not be regarded, but it be full of fylthynes? And this the lawes ought to take hede of, and of thoſe vngracious bokes, ſuche as bee in my countrey in Spayne: Amadiſe, Floriſande, Tirante, Triſtane, and Celeſtina the baude, mother of naughtynes. In Fraunce: Lancelot du Lake, Paris and Vienna, Ponthus and Sidonia, and Melucyne. In Flaunders: Flory and white flowre, Leonell and Canamour, Curias and Floret, Pyramus and Thiſbe. In Englande: Parthenope, Genarides, Hippomadon, Willyam and Meliour, Libius, and Arthur, Guye, Beuis, and many other. And ſome tranſlated out of latine into vulgare ſpeaches, as the vnſauery conceites of Pogius, and of Eneas Siluius, Eurialus and Lucretia. Whiche bokes but ydel men wrote vnlearned, and ſet al vpon filth and vicioulnes, in whome I wonder what ſhulde delite men, but that vice pleaſeth them ſo muche. As for learning,

nyng, none is to be loked for in those men, whiche saw neuer so muche as a shadowe of learnyng theim selfe. And whan they tell ought, what delyte can bee in those thynges, that be so playne and folyshe lies? One kylleth.xx.hym selfe alone, an other.xxx.an other wounded with. C. woundes, and lefte deade, ryseth vp againe, and on the next daie made hole and strong, ouercometh ii. gyauntes, and than goeth awaie loden with golde, and syluer, and precious stones, mo than a galy wolde cary awaie. What a madnes is it of folkes, to haue pleasure in these bokes? Also there is no witte in them, but a fewe wordes of wanton lust, which be spoken to moue hir mynde, with whome they loue, if it chaunce she bee stedfast. And if they be red but for this, the beste were to make bokes of baudes craftes, for in other thynges, what crafte can be had of suche a maker, that is ignorant of all good crafte? Nor I neuer hearde man saie, that he lyked these bokes, but those that neuer touched good bokes. And I my selfe sometime haue red in them, but I neuer founde in them one stepe either of goodnes or witte. And as for those that praise them, as I knowe some that doo, I will beleue theim, if they praise theim after that they haue reade Cicero and Senec, or sainct Hieronyme, or holy scripture, and haue mended theyr lyuyng better. For often tymes the onely cause why they praise theim, is because they se in theim theyr owne condicions, as in a glasse. Finally thoughe they were neuer so wytty and pleasant, yet wolde I haue no pleasure infected with poyson, nor haue no woman quickened vnto vyce. And verily they be but foolishe husbandes and madde, that suffer their wiues to ware more vngraciously subtyle by readynge of suche bokes. But

wherto shoulde I speake of foolysche and ignozant wzi-
ters, seynge that Ouide wolde not, that he that enten-
deth to flee vnchast maners, shuld ones touche the most
witty and well learned poetes of the grekes and latins,
that wzite of loue: what can be tolde moze plesant, moze
swete, moze quicke, moze pzofitable, with all maner of
learning, than these poetes, Calimachus, Phileta, Ana-
creon, Sappho, Tibullus, Pzopertius, and Gallus:
whiche poetes all Grece, all Italy, yea and all the
wozlde setteth great pzice by: and yet Ouide byddeth
chaste folkes let them alone, saiyng in the seconde boke
of the Remedies of loue.

Though I be lothe, yet wyll I saie,
With wauton poetes thou do not mell.
Ha myne owne vertues nowe I cast awaie.
Beware Calimachus: foz he teacheth well
To loue, and Cous also well as he,
And olde Anacreon wziteth full wantonly,
And Sappho eke often hath caused me
To deale with my lady moze liberally.
who can escape free, that readeth Tibullus,
Oz Pzopertius, whan he dothe synge
Unto his lady Cynthia: Oz els Gallus:
And my bokes also sounde suche lyke thynge.

¶ They sounde so in dede, and therfoze was he banis-
shed, nothynge without a cause of that good pzynce.
Wherfoze I pzaise greatly the saied maners eyther of
that tyme, oz elles of that pzince. But we lyue nowe in
a Chzisten countrey, and who is he, that is any thynge
displeased with makers of suche bokes nowe adaies:
Plato casteth out of the common welthe of wyse men,
whiche he made, Homer and Hesiodus the poetes: and

yet

yet haue they none yl thing in comparison vnto Ouidis bokes of loue, whiche we reade, and cary theym in our handes, and learne them by herte, yea and some schoole maisters teache theim to their scholers, and some make expolicions and expound the vices. Augustus banished Ouide hym selfe, and thynke you than that he woulde haue kepte these expositours in the countrey: excepte a man woulde reken it a worse dede to write vice than to expounde it, and enfourme the tender myndes of ponge folkes therewith. We banysshe hym that maketh false weyghtes and measures, and that counterfeteth coyne, or an instrumente: And what a worke is made in these thinges for smalle mattiers. But he is had in honour, and counted a maister of wysedome, that corruptethe the ponge people. Therfore a woman shulde beware of all these bokes, lyke wyse as of serpentes or snakes. And if there be any woman, that hath suche delyte in these bokes, that she wyll not leaue them out of hir handes: she shulde not onely be kepte frome theim, but also if she reade good bokes with an yll wyll and lothe therto, hir father and frendes shulde prouide that she maie be kept from all readyng. And so by vilsure, forget learnyng, if it can be done. For it is better to lacke a good thyng, than to vse it yll. Nor a good woman will take no suche bokes in hande, nor fyle hir mouthe with them: And as muche as she can, she will go about to make other as lyke hir selfe as she maie, bothe by doynge well, and teachyng well, and also as far as she maie rule by commaundyng and chargynge. Nowe what bokes ought to bee reade, some, euery body knoweth, as the gospelles, the actes, the epistoles of the apostles, and the olde Testament, sainct Hieronyme, sainct Cipzian, Augustine,

gustyne, Ambrose, Hillary, Gregorye, Plato, Cicero, Senec, and suche other. But as touchyng some, wyse and sad men must be asked counsaile of, in them. For the woman oughte not to folowe hir owne iudgemente, lest whan she hath but a lyght entring in learning, she shoulde take false for true: hurtfull in stede of holsome, folysshe and peuysshe for sad and wyse. She shall fynde in suche bokes as are wourthy to be reade, all thynges more witty, and ful of greatter pleasure, and more sure to truste vnto: whiche shall bothe profyte the lyfe, and meruailously delyte the minde. Therfore on holy daies continually, and sometyme on worksyng daies, lette hir reade or here such as shall lifte vp the mind to god, and set it in a chrysten quietnes, and make the liuing better. Also it shoulde be beste afore she go to masse, to reade at home the gospel and the epistole of the daie, and with it some exposicion, if she haue any. Nowe whan thou comest from masse, and hast ouer loked thy house, as muche as perteineth vnto thy charge, reade with a quyete minde some of these that I haue spoken of, if thou canst reade, if not, here. And on some worksyng daies do likewyse, if thou be not letted with some necessary busynes in thy house, and thou haue bokes at hande: and specially if there be any longe space betwene the holy daies. For thinke not that holy daies be ordeined of the churche to p'aye on, and to sitte ydell, and talke with thy gossyppes: but vnto the entente that than thou maiest more intentiuely, and with a more quiete minde, thynke of god, and this lyfe of ours, and the lyfe in heauen, that is to come.

Of

Of virginitee. Cap. vi.

NOVVE will I talke all together with the mayde hir selfe: whiche hath within hir a treasure without comparison, that is the pureneſſe bothe of body and mynde. Nowe so many thinges come vnto my remembraunce to saie, that I wot not where is best to begyn: whether it were better to begynne where as saincte Augustyne dothe, whan he will intreate of holy virginitee. All the holy Churche is a virgine, maryed vnto one husbande Chriſte, as saincte Paule writeth vnto the Corinthies. Than what honoure be they woorthy to haue, that be the membres of it, which kepe the same ofkyce in flesshe, that the hole Churche kepeth in kaythe, whiche koloweth the mother of hir husbande and lorde: for the churche is also a mother and a virgine. Nor there is nothyng that our lorde delyteth more in, than virgines: nor wherein aungelles more gladly abyde, and plaie with, and talke with: For they be virgines also them selfe, and their lorde, whiche wolde haue a virgine vnto his mother, and a virgine to his moſte dere diſciple, and the churche his spouſe a virgine. And also he maryed vnto hym selfe other virgines, and goethe vnto mariages with virgins. And whither so euer he goethe, that lambe without spotte, whiche made vs cleane with his bloude, an hundred and .xl. thousande virgins kolowe hym. It is writen in the canticles: Our ſiſter is a littell one and hath no breaſtes. Whether that bee the saieyng of Chriſte or aungelles to the soule, in whom standeth the verie virginitee pleasant vnto god. All glory of the kinges daughter is inwarde, saith Dauid in the psalme. There is that golden clothyng, there

Cant. 8.

Psal. 44.

is the garmente sette and powdred with so many vertuous and precious stones. Be not proude mayde, that thou arte hole of bodye, if thou bee dronken in mynde: nor because no man hath touched thy body, if many men haue persed thy mynde. What auaileth it, thy body to be cleane, whan thou beaest thy mynd and thy thought infected with a foule and an horrible blotte? O thou mayde, thy mynde is withered by bournyng with mannes heate, nor thou fretest not with holy loue, but hast dried vp all the good fatnes of the pleasures of paradise. Therfore arte thou the foolishe mayde, and hast no oyle, and whyle thou rennest to the sellar, arte shutte
Mat. 25. forthe: And as our lorde in the gospell threteth: whan thou commest againe, and knockest, thou shalte be answered: who art thou? I knowe the not. Thou shalte saie than: knowest thou not this bodye closed and vntouched of men? Our lorde shall saie again: I se not the body: I se the soule open vnto men, and vnto dyuelles worse than men, and often knocked at. Thou art proud mayde, because thy bealy hath no cause to swelle, whan thy mynde is swollen, not with mannes sede but with dyuels. For here howe well thy spouse lyketh the, thou knowest not thy selfe. O moste goodly of all women,
Can. 5. come forthe and folowe the steppes of thy flockes, and fede thy kydde by the tentes of the heardemen. Thou knowest not howe all onely virginitee is good, thou art not my spouse, come forthe, and go after the steppes of those flockes, whom thou haste norysshed in thy mynde. And sith thou doest not fede my kiddes, fede thine own? Thou louest not me so muche, that am onely the highest and the beste heardeman. Tary nere the tentes of the heardemen, whom thou folowest. For if thou folowedest

me,

me, onely one herdeman shulde be knowen vnto the, and not many. For he will haue all to bee plaine and euen. Thy wombe swelleth not, nor there is no cause why, nor lette not thy mynde than swell, nor let there bee no cause why. I praie the, vnderstande thyne owne goodnesse mayde, thy pryce can not be estemed, if thou ioine a chast mynde vnto thy chaste body, if thou shutte vppe bothe bodye and mynde, and seale theim with those seales that none can open, but he that hath the keye of Dauid, that is thy spouse whiche resteth so in the, as in a temple moste cleane and goodly. Thynkest thou this any smal thyng, that thou maiest receiue onely by pureuesse that thyng, whiche can not bee comprehended in this hole worlde? How glad is a woman, if she beare in hir wombe a childe, whiche shalbe a kynge? But thou beaest all a kyng redy not onely in thy wombe, but also in thy minde: whiche is more goodly, yea and that suche a kynge, in whose garment this tytle of dignitee is writen: Kynge of all kynges, and lorde of all lordes. Of whome prophetes haue prophecied, and his reygne is the reygne of all worldes, whose reigne the angell tolde shulde haue none ende. Let vs nowe lyfte vp our selfe aboue the common people, and let vs dispute this most goodly mattier with saincte Augustine: but yet so that thou maiest perceiue vs: and doubtles thou shalte perceiue vs better than we shall our selfe. For we speake of thy goodnesse, whiche thou arte not ignorant of: and we shewe the that thynge, that thou haste within the. The holy virgine our lady conceiued fyrste in hir mynde our lorde Christe, and after in hir body. And it was a more honorable, noble, and excellente thynge to conceiue in mynde than in body. Wherfore thou art partener of the

Apoc. 3.

Apoc. 19.

more excellent conception. O happy art thou, that arte meruailously mother vnto an excellent and meruelous childe. Our lorde in the gospel, whan the woman saied. Luc.11. Blessed bee the wombe that beare the, and the breastes that thou suckedst: he aunswered, Nay, But blessed be they that here the worde of god, and kepe it. And whan the Jewes tolde hym that his mother and bretherne tarted hym with out, he asked them: who is my mother Mat.12. and my bretherne? And poyntynge his hande towarde his disciples: Those be saied he, my bretherne and mother, and who so els obeyeth the commandement of my father. Wherefore virgins and all holy soules, engendre Christe spiritually. Howe be it corporally onely one virgin dyd beare god and man, whiche is spouse and also father vnto all other virgins. O thou maide, thinkest thou this but a smalle thyng that thou arte bothe mother, spouse, and doughter to that god, in whome nothyng can be, but it be thyne: and thou maiest with good ryght, chalenge for thyne? For bothe thou gettest and arte gotten and maried vnto hym. If thou woldest Psal.45. haue a fayre spouse, it is saied by hym: Thou arte beautifull aboue the childrene of man, grace is diffused in thy lyppes. If thou woldest haue a ryche husband, thou maiest here saied of hym: Honour and ryches is in his house. If thou woldest haue a gentilman, he is goddes sonne, and rekeneth fourtene kynges in his petegrewe, and his generacions can not be expressed, and the aunciante of his stocke is before the makyng of the worlde, Iob.9. tyme euer lastynge. If thou woldest haue a myghty husbande, It is saied by hym: He is wyse in herte, and mightee in strength. And in the.xliiii.psalme: Gyrde the with thy sworde vpon thy thygh most myghtily. If thou

woldest

woldest haue a good one, thou shalt here nothyng ofte-
ner of hym, than that he is the beste. If thou wouldest
haue one of great possessions, thou redest of hym, that
all thynges bee subiecte vnder his feete. And in an o- Psal. 8.
ther psalme, that all thinges do homage vnto hym, and
that not onely men be subiectes vnto hym, but also an- Psal. 118.
gels, and the elementes, and the heauens: whiche thing
the veritee it selfe testifieth of his owne selfe, saiyng: Al
power is geuen vnto me, in heauen and earth. If thou Mat. 28.
woldest haue a wyse husbande, all thinges be naked and
open vnto the eies of hym. For he is not onely wyse,
but also the very wysedome it selfe, not the wisedome of
Socrates, or Plato, or Aristotle, but of god almyghty:
Whiche by that same wysedome hath made and gouer-
neth this worlde that thou seest. Now thinke with what
diligence this peerle ought to be kepte, that maketh the
like vnto the churche, like vnto our lady, sister vnto an-
gels, mother vnto god, and the spouse of Christe, beside
worldely honours, whiche ought to haue no place, or a
verate lyttell place, in a christen bodies herte: But yet
also they as it were fasten their eies vpon a virgine.
Howe pleasaunt and deare to euery body is a virgyne: In what estimacion virgins be
Howe reuerent a thing, euen vnto theim that be yll and
vicious theim selfe: And amonge those foule and fyl-
thy goddes of the pagans, they saie that Cybele, whom
they all called mother, was a virgine. And Diana was
the most fauoured of the goddes, because she was a per-
petuall virgin, Also three thinges made Pallas honou-
rable, virginitee, strength, and wysedome, and she was
feigned to bee bredde of Jupiters brayne, whome they
called the greatteste and prince of the goddes, of whiche
nothyng myght growe, but pure, chaste, and wyse. So

that they thought virginitee and wisedome were ioyned together. And they dedicated the noumbre of seuen, both to chastitee and wisedome: And saied that the Muses, whome they called the rulers of all sciences, were virgins. And in the temple of Apollo Delphicus, the wyse woman, whiche inspired with the heauenly spirite, shewed thynges to come vnto them, that demaunded to knowe, was euer a virgine: whome they called alwaie Pithia. Also saincte Hieronyme saieth, that all the Sibyls, whom Varro saieth were tenne in noumbre, were virgins. At Rome there was a temple of Vesta, vnto whome virgines dyd ministre, whiche were called Vestales, and all the Senatours wolde ryse and reuerence them, euery officer gaue theim the waie, and they were in great honour with all the people of Rome. Virginitee was euer an holy thynge euen amonge theues, breakers of Saintuary, vngracious liuers, mourderers, and also amonge wilde beastes. Saincte Tecla, as saincte Ambrose saith, altered the nature of wilde beastes with the reuerence of virginitee. Virginitee hath so muche meruailous honour in it, that wild lyons regarde it.

Of the kepyng of virginitee and chastitee. Cap. vii.

HOVVE muche than oughte that to bee set by, that hath ofte tymes defended women againste greate capitanes, tyrannes, and great hostes of men? We haue red of women, that haue ben taken and lette go againe of the moste vnruly souldiours, onely for the reuerence of the name of virginitee, because they saied that they were virgins. For they iudged it a great wickednes, for a shorte and small ymage of pleasure, to minishe so great a treasure: And euery of theim had leauer that

an

an other shoulde bee the causer of so wyked a dede than hym selfe. O cursed mynde, and not woythy to lyue, the whiche willyngly spoyleth hir selfe of soo pretious a thynge, whiche men of warre, that are accustomed to al mischiefe, yet dyede to take awaie. Also louers, which be blynde in the heate of loue, yet they stay and take auisement. For there is none so outragious a louer, if he thinke she be a virgin, but he will alwaie open his eies, and take discreacion to hym and deliberacion, and take counsaile to chaunge his mynde. Euery man is so soze a dyed to take awaie that, which is of so great price, that afterwarde neither can they their selfe kepe noz restoze againe, thoughe they shall haue no losse by the meanes. And the vngracious mayde doubteth not to lose that, whiche ones gone, she shall by no meanes recouer again, whan she hath ones lost the greatest treasure that euer she had. And if mocions of the mind may do ought, whiche if they be reasonable and honest, ought to beare great rule. Let hir, that hath loste hir virginitee, turne hir whiche waie she will, she shall fynde all thynges sorowfull and heauy, wailing, and mourning, and angry, and displeaserfull. What sozowe will hir kynnesfolkes make, whan euery one shall thynke theim selfe dyshonested by one shame of that mayde? What mournynge, what teares, what weppynge of the father and mother, and bzingers vp? Dooest thou quiete theim with this pleasure foz soo muche care and laboure? Is this the rewarde of thy bzingyng vp? What cursyng wyll there be of hir aquaintance? What talke of neighbours, frendes, and companions, cursyng that vngracious ponge woman. What mockynge and bablynge of those maides, that enuied hir befoze? What a lothynge and abhoz-

horrynge of those that loued hir: what fleynge of hir company and desertnes, whan euery mother wyll kepe not onely theyr daughters, but also theyr sonnes frome the infection of suche an vnthriftee mayde: And woars also, if she had any, all flee awaie frome hir. And those that before semsled loue with hir, they openly hate hir, yea and nowe and than with open woordes, will caste the abominable deed in hir tethe, that I wonder howe a ponge woman, seeyng this, can either haue ioye of hir lyfe, or lyue at all, and not pine awaie for sorowe. Now wherto shulde I reherce the hate and angre of folkes: For I knowe that many fathers haue cut the throtes of their daughters, bretherne of their systers, and kynnesmen of their kynnes women.

¶Hippomenes, a great manne of Athenes, whan he knewe his daughter defoyled of one, he shut hir vp in a stable with a wylde horse, kepte meatles, so the horse, whan he had suffred great hunger longe, and because he was of nature fierse, he waxed mad, and all to tare the ponge woman to fede hym selfe with.

¶Pontius Aufidianus a Romaine, whan he perceiued his daughter to bee betrayed vnto Fannius Saturninus by hir tutour, he slewe bothe hir and the seruante.

¶Publius Attilius Philiscus slewe his daughter because she defouled hir selfe in aduoutry.

¶In the same citee, Lucius Virgineus the Centurion, because he had leauer lose his daughter, and se hir dye a good maybe, than haue hir deflowred, slewe with a sworde his welbeloued and onely daughter Virginea, whan he coude fynde none other meanes, least she shuld be compelled to be at the luste of the iudge.

¶In Spaine by our fathers daies in Tarraco, two

bre

bzetherne, that thoughe their syster had been a mayde, whan they sawe hir great with childe, they dissembled theyr anger so longe as shee was with childe: but as soone as she was delyuered of hir childe, they thrust swordes in to hir bealy, and slewe hir, the mydde wyke lokyng on. In the same parte of Spaine, whan I was a chylde, three maidens with a longe towell strangled a mayden that was one of theyr companions, whan they toke hir in the abominable dede. Histories be full of examples, and daiely ye see, neyther it is meruaile, that these bee done of fathers and frendes, and that the affection of loue and charitee is tourned so sodeynely in to hate: Whan the women taken with the abominable and cruell loue, all loue caste quite out of theyr herte, hate their fathers and mothers, bzetherne and childzen, not onely their frendes and acquaintance. And this I wolde not that onely maydes shulde thinke spoken vnto theim, but also maryed women and wydowes, and finally all women.

¶ Nowe let the woman tourne to hir selfe, and consydze hir owne vngraciousnes, shee shall feare and abhorre hir selfe, nor take reste daie nor nyghte, but euer vexed with the scourge of hir owne conscyence, and burned as hote fyre brondes, shall neuer loke stedfastly vppon any body, but she shall bee in feare, leaste they knowe some what of hir lewdenes: that than no body shall speake softely, but she shall thynke they speake of hir vnthriftynes. She shall neuer heare talkynge of naughtie women, but she shall thynke it spoken bycause of hir. Nor she shall neuer heare name of corruption spoken by an other, but she shall thynke it mente by hir, or of hir selfe. Nor no body shall stour priuely

in the house, but she shall feare, least hir vngraciousnes bee opened, and that she shall bee punyshed streyght. What realme wouldest thou by with suche perpetuall veracion? Whiche many a man supposeth to bee none other peine in hell. The same peyne haue wycked men, but women farre sozer, because theyz offences bee rekened fouler, and they bee moze timozous of nature. And doubtles, if it be well consydzed, women be wozthy these punyshementes, and muche wozse, that kepe not theyz honestee dilygently. Foz as foz a man nedeth manye thynges, as wisedome, eloquence, knowlage of thinges, with remembzaunce, some crafte to lyue by, Justice, Lyberalytee, lustie stomacke, and other thynges moo, that were to longe to reherce, and thoughe some of these do lacke, it is not to be disliked, so that many of theim be had: but in a woman, no manne will loke foz eloquence, great wytte, oz pzudence, oz crafte to lyue by, oz ozdzyng of the commen weale, oz iustice, oz lyberalitee: Finally no man will loke foz any other thynge of a woman, but hir honestee: the whiche onely, if it bee lacked, is lyke as in a man, if he lacke all that he shulde haue. Foz in a woman the honestee is in stede of all. It is an euyll keper, that can not kepe one thynge well committed to hir keppng, and put in truste to hir with muche commendacion of wozdes: and specially whiche no manne wyll take frome hir agaynste hir wyll, noz touche it, excepte she be wyllyng hir selfe. The whiche thynge onely, if a woman remembze, it shall cause hir to take better hede, and to be a moze ware keper of hir goodnes: whiche alone, thoughe all other thynges be neuer so well in saftes, so loste, all other thynges perisshe together there with. what can be sake to a woman

saieth

saieth Lucrecia, whan hir honestre is gone? And yet had she a chaste minde in a corrupte body. Therfore as Quintilian saieth, she thryste a sworde in to hir body, and auenged the compulsion, that the pure mynde myght be separated from the defyled body, as shortely as coulde be. But I saie not this because other shoulde folowe the dedde, but the mynde: Because shee that hath ones lost hir honestee, shoulde thynke there is nothynge lefte. Take frome a woman hir beautie, take from hir, kynred, riches, comelines, eloquence, sharpenes of witte, counnynge in hir crafte: geue hir chastitee, and thou hast geuen hir all thinges. And on that other syde, geue hir all these thynges, and calle hir a naughtie packe: with that one woorde thou haste taken all from hir, and hast lefte hir bare and foule. There be also other thynges, bothe in the body and mynde, that helpe a woman vnto the keppng of hir honestee, wherof I wyll speake nowe.

¶Of the orderyng of the body in a virgine. Cap. viii.

THOVGHE it were not for this purpose to speake of the bodye, not withstandynge for as muche as some thynges that be in the mynde come of the reason and complexion of the body. Therfore muste we speake some thynge of the ordryng of the body of a virgine. Fyrste of all me thinke that it is to be tolde theyr father and mother, as Aristotle doeth bydde in his historie of beastes, that is, that they kepe their daughters, specially whan they begynne to growe frome chyldes state, and holde them frome mens companye. For that time they be geuen vnto moste luste of the bodye. Also the maydens shulde kepe them selfe, bothe at all other, and

at that tyme specially, from either hearyng or seeyng, or yet thynkyng any foule thynge, whiche thyng she shall labour to dooe. Neuer the lesse at other tymes to, and vnto the tyme, that they be maryed, muche fastynge shall bee good, whiche doeth not feble the body, but brydell it, and pzesse it downe, and quenche the heate of youth. For these be onely the verate and holy fastes. Lette theyr meate be meane and easy to gette, neyther hot of it selfe, nor spised with spices, nor delycate. And they oughte to remembze, that our fyrste mother for meate was cast out of paradise. And many younge women that had ben vsed to delycate meates, whan they had not theym at home, haue gone forthe frome home, and ieoperded theyr honestee. Lette their drynke be the drynke prepared of nature, that is cleane water. Valerius Maximus saieth, that wyne was vnknowen vnto women of Rome in olde tyme, leaste they shoulde fall in any shame. For by cause it was wont to be the nexte waie frome Bacchus the father of intemperance, vnto Venus vnlefull. But if their stomacke will not beare water, geue theim some ale or bere, or small wyne, as shall be sufficient to digest their meate, and not enflame their bodies. Nor that is not onely good for theyr maners and rankenes of the bodye, and wantonnes to kepe theim vnder, but also shall kepe better theyr helthe. I haue red in an epistole of saincte Hieronime vnto Furia in this maner.

Liber. 2. capi. 1.

¶ Phisicians; and suche as wzite the natures of mennes bodies, and specially Galen in the boke of Helthe saithe, that the bodyes of childzene and younge menne, and those that be in lustie age, bothemen and women, be verate hotte of naturall heate: and that all meates

that

that encreaſe heate, be verie noyſome for them: and that it is good for theym to vſe all colde thynges in meates and drinkes: As in contrary wyſe vnto olde men, and ſuche as be full of fleme and cold, hote meates and olde wyne be beſte. Wherfore our ſauiour ſaythe: Take you heede to your ſelfe, that your hertes bee not ouer combren with ſurfet and dronkennes, and the cares of this lyfe. And the apoſtle ſaieth: wyne, in whom is lechery. Neyther it is wonder that he that made the veſſell dyd perceiue this by the veſſell, that he made. Where Terence, whoſe entente was to dyſcribe and ſhewe the condicions of the worlde, ſaied thus: without meate and drinke courage waxeth colde. Therfore firſt if they stomacke be ſtronge enoughe, take water in thy wyne or drinke, vntill thy maydes yeres be paſte: and ſuche water as is moſte colde. And if thou mateſt not for feblenes, myngle it as Timotheus dyd, with a lytell wyne for thy ſtomacke and weakenes. Than in meate eſchewe all hotte thynges. I ſpeake not onely of fleſh, wherof the veſſel of election ſainct Paule ſpeaketh this ſentence, ſaiynge: It is good to eate no fleſſhe, nor drinke no wyne: but alſo of pulſe, all thoſe that be full of wynde and heauie ſhoulde be eſſchewed. And a littell before: what nedeth it vs for to boſte our chaſtitee, whiche without it haue all beſyde that apperteyneth, as abſtinence and ſmalle fare, it can not bryng profite of it ſelfe: The apoſtle wexeth his bodye, and ſubduethe it vnto the commandement of the mynde, leaſt he ſhulde not kepe that hym ſelfe, whiche he byddeth other to doo. Than howe can a yonge woman, that hath a body hot with meate, be ſure of hir ſelfe: Nor I condempne not with theſe woordes meates that god hath ordeyned to

Lac.21.

Eph.5.

Rom.14.

vse with rendryng of thankes, but I take frome yonge men and maydens, the kendlyng of luste. For neyther the bournyng Etna, nor the countrey of Vulcane, nor Vesenus, nor yet Olumpus boyleth with suche heate, as the bodies of younge folkes enflamed with wyne and delicate meates, done.

¶ All this haue I brought in of saincte Hieronyme, that you myghte knowe what thinges that mayster of chastitee dydde teache, whiche writyng vnto Salutina, hadde leauer leoperde the healthe of the bodye than the soule, saiyng: It is better that the stomacke ake, than the mynde, and to rule the body, than to doo it seruice, and stagger in goyng, than in chastitee.

¶ The moste holy man Gregorius Nazianzenus, that was saincte Hieronimis matter, wolde that his mayde shoulde alay hir hunger with breade, and quenche hir thyrste with water.

¶ Hilarius the heremite, lyued in wylderneſſe with small foode, scantly preseruyng the lyfe, and yet felte hym selfe dyuers tymes pricked with the bodiely luste, he wered his body with fastyng, saiyng: I shall tame the concupiscence, to make the thynke vpon thy meate, and not vpon thy pleasure. And this saie the disciples of Christe, the felowes of saincte Paule, beynge geuen vnto sobre and chaste religion: As who knewe, that the nourysshementes of holy men sente by the grace of god, were but symple and small to contente nature, without any pleasure.

4.Reg.4 et.5. ¶ Helise nourisshed hym selfe and the chyldrene of the prophetes with wylde herbes, and he byddeth, make swete the bytter meate with flower, and not with suger. And he commaunded the souldiours in Samaria, of whome

whome he had put out the eies, to be fedde with breade and water.

¶Johñ the Baptiste, that was chosen the shewer of Christe, and the lyght to come, was fed in deserte with grashops and wylde hony. Habacuch caryed the meate of the reapers vnto Daniell in Babylon, whiche was breade baken vnder the asshes. And a cuppe of water was sent vnto Helie from heauen, to refreshe him with, and yet myght god haue sent frome heauen partriges, and phesauntes, and capons, and marche paines, as well as breade, but holy folkes nede nourishemente to holde the soule in the body, and not to drowne it with. Mat. 3. Dan. 14. 4. Reg. 19

¶What saie philosophers, and the maisters of worldly wisedome, all speake of meate that is easye to gette, to kepe the mynde sobre and the bodye chaste: Socrates the father of Philosophie dyd get by sobre diet, that he was neuer infected with any sore or ieoperdous sicknes.

¶Also Cornelius Tacitus writeth, that Seneca the philosopher, in all his riches fed hym selfe with fruite and water: and therefore his bodye was broughte so lowe, that whan his veynes were opened, there woulde almoste no bloude renne out.

¶Howe trow you that Xenocrates liued, whiche whan his scholers hadde layde hym a goodly queane in his bedde, and was muche prouoked of hir vnto luste, yet he was not moued?

¶Plato in his lawes forbyddeth younge men wyne. Cicero in his offyces woulde haue all the lyuynge and arrate of the body, to be taken to the helth and strength, and not for pleasure. And he saithe also, if we woulde consyder, what excellence and dignitee is in the nature of man, we shulde understande, howe great shame it is

to

to waste it awaie riottously, and to leade the lyfe delycately and deliciously: and how honest it is to lyue chastely, sobrely, sadly, and measurably. This saieth Cicero. Also Ouidius, geuynge remedye of loue, byddeth theim that shall lyue chastely also to lyue temperately, and eschewe suche meate as moueth the bodye to luste, and wynes specially, and to bryng suche to the table as refreigne the luste of the body.

When I speake of hotte meates, I wolde be vnderstande in suche exercises also, that heate the body, and of oyntmentes, spices, talkyng, and also sighte of men. For all these be hurtfull vnto the chastitee: for they fire the mynde with fylthy and ieoperdous heate. Nor let not your bed be verie soft, but cleane: the whiche thing also is to bee regarded in clothes, that they be not ouer delicate, but without fylthe and without spotte, and lyghtly the minde reioyseth in the clenlines of the body. And againe, a deyntee and a delycate mynde delyteth in sylkes and costely clothes: and what so euer is not suche, it counteth harde and greuous. Gregorius Nazianzenus forbyddeth maides to weare golde and peerle. What a foly is it, to wene that these woordes of
Mat. 11. our sauiour Christe, Ecce qui mollibus uestiuntur, in domibus regum sunt, that is to saie, Lo, they that be clothed in delycate clothes, bee in kynges houses: shoulde be vnderstanden on this wyse, that those, whiche bee in the companye of Christen kynges, shoulde be clothed with fyne and costely clothyng. Christes faithe is holy and sadde, and as the pocke of it is easy, pleasant, and swete vnto the soule, and wherein the soule fyndeth rest, so is it heuy and peinful vnto the pleasures of the body. Nor let not a mayde slepe ouer longe, and yet suffycient

cient for hir helthe, the whiche we prouyde for on this wise, that they shall fare better that folowe this sobre dyette of ours, than they that folowe pleasures and delycates: vnto whiche pleasures who so is geuen, we se be pale and consumed. And besyde all this, is some labour to be geuen, and some occupacion mete for a virgin, as I haue rehersed. For the diuelles subtiltee neuer cometh more sooner than in idelnes: Nor Venus neuer vseth hir craftes more redely in any other cases, and that not onely in women, but also in men, whiche be more stedefast and constant. Ouide the craftes man of handlyng loue, determineth, that Egisthus sette his mynde to defoule Clytemnestra, the wyfe of kynge Agamemnon, and to kyll Agamemnon hym selfe, for none other cause, but because he was slouthfull. Therfore in the remedies of loue, that is one of the chiefe preceptes, that the darte of Cupide take vs not idell. For he saieth.

If thou wylte banyshe idelnes,
Cupides bowes on the shall haue no myght:
And also his hotte fyre brondes
Shall lye quenched deuoyde of lyght.

¶ Sainct Hieronime counsaileth the holy virgin Demetrias to eschewe ydelnes. And therefore whan she hath dooen hir praiers, to goe in hande with wolle and weauynge that by suche chaunge of woorkes the daies seme not longe. Nor he bad not, that she shulde worke, because that she was in any pouertee, whiche was one of the mooste noble women in Rome, and rycheste, but that by the occasion of workyng, she shulde thynke on nothynge, but suche as perteineth vnto the seruice of our lorde: whiche place he endeth in this wise. I wyll

speake generally, nothynge shall be specially precious in Christes syght, but in that thou makest thy selfe, eyther for thyne owne vse, or ensample of other virgins, or to geue vnto thy grande mother, or thy mother, no not though thou deale all thy goodes vnto poore folkes. And verely so it is, for she that wyl be idel, or also geuen to play, and passyng of hir life in pleasures, is not worthy to haue hir meate in the churche of Christe, in the whiche sayncte Paule the greatteste preachour of
2. Thes. 3. Christe crieth, and pronounceth as a lawe: who that laboreth not, lette theim not eate. This is the commen peyne of mankynde, geuen vnto theim for the fyrst of-
Gen. 3. fence of our auncient father Adam: Thou shalte eate thy bred in the sweatte of thy face. And doubtles those that be subiecte vnto this generall peyne, whan they offende and synne no lesse than other, they shall haue an other peyne, eyther sorer, or els no lesse.

¶ Nowe seyng that I haue byd, that womens myndes shuld be occupied, eyther with worke or els holy studye and communicacion, least they fall in to vyce by ydelnesse: what shulde we thynke by them that play at cardes or dice, whiche maner of pastyme, whan it is foule in a man in a woman it is to be abhorred: what can a woman learne, or thynke, playyng at the dyce? The mynde must nedes be altred and tourned all to couetousnes, that is of it selfe enclined there vnto, and after fall to periury, for gredinesse of the money. Also on the other syde, if men be there, she shal here many thynges vncomly for a woman to here. What a foule thynge is it, to se a woman in stede of hir wolbasked, to handle the table bourde, for hir spindell, the dyce, and for hir clewe or prayer boke, to tourne the cardes? There is no

wyse

wyse man, but he had leauer see hir ydell, than so occupied. For there is no wyse man, but he will curse bothe hir that learneth suche thynges, and hym that taught it hir, and theim that suffred theim.

Of the raymentes. Cap. ix.

It semeth to apperteine vnto the same place, to entreate of the other ornamentes of the body: Fyrste of peyntynge. Verely I woulde fayne knowe, what the mayden meaneth, that peynteth hir selfe: if it bee to please hir selfe, it is a vayne thynge: if it be to please Christe, it is a foly: if it be to delyte men, it is an vngracious deede. Thou haste but one spouse, and to please hym with, make thy soule gaie with vertue, and he shall kysse the for thy beautee. But parauenture thou sekest some man to be thy spouse, and woldest please him with peyntynge: Fyrste I shall shewe the, howe foolysshe a thynge it is, and than howe vngracious. Me thynke it muche lyke, if thou wylt go about to wyn theim with peynctyng, as thoughe thou wouldest entise or atempt hym with a viser: whome whan thy viser is ones of, thou shalt make as muche to lothe the, as thou madest to lyke the, whan it was on. Thou art but in yll case, if thou haue nothyng els to please hym with, that shall be thyne husbande, but onely peyntynge: howe shalte thou please hym, whan thou lackeste thy peyntynge? Excepte thou wylte neuer washe out that crust, but go so with a cruste of peynctyng to bedde, and so rise, and bee so with in and abrode amonge folkes. And more ouer, what a peyne is it to entende that peyntynge for any bodye, and not onely for the to kepe it hole stylle? what a shame is it, if any water by chaunce lyght on

it, or the peyntynge fortune to melte by the occasion of swette or heate, and shewe the verate skynne: there can nothyng be more fylthy to se to. And who I praie you, wyll count them to be feyre, that he knoweth to be slubbered with peintyng, and not rather the fouler? They lose all the honour of beautie, whan they be peynted. For all the beautie, that there is, is conteyned to be in the peyntyng. And also the tender skynne will reuyll the more soone, and all the fauoure of the face waxeth olde, and the breath stynketh, and the tethe rusten, and an euyll ayre all the bodye ouer, bothe by the reason of the ceruse, and quicke siluer, and specially by the reason of the soopes, wherwith they prepare the bodye, as it were a table, againste the peyntynge on the nexte daie. Wherefore Ouyde called these doynges venomes, and not without a cause. Also Iuuenall asketh a question proprely: She that is with so manye oyntementes slubbered and starched, is it to be called a face or a sore? The whiche thinges I wolde more largely intreate, but that I am borne in that Citee, where as the women haue a vyle name for this thyng: and in my mynde not without a cause. I will rebuke mine owne countrey, whiche is to me the most dere, that for shame it maie leaue. Nowe if thou canste not els bee maryed, it is better neuer to mary, than to offende Christe for it, and be maryed to some foolishe man, that shall haue more delyte in thy peyntyng, than in thy selfe. For what hope canste thou haue in that man, that hath more delyte in a cruste of white Ceruse, than in an honest woman? God hath geuen the a face after the image of his son: nor he hath not geuen it naked: For he hath inspired the spirite of lyfe, that the image of his lyfe, and all thynge maie appere

pere in it. Why than doest thou ouer couer it with dirte and myre? The apostle Paule byddeth a man not to couer his heade, because it is the image of god: what will he saie of the image of god in a womans face, so filed with that myre? And because no man shall reken it as a bourde, Saincte Hieronime against Heluidius writeth in this wise. i, Cor, 11.

¶ She that is peynted by a glasse, and in dispyte of hym that made hir, she gothe aboute to bee feyrer than she is borne. And vnto Furia: what dothe purpurice or Cerusse in a christen bodyes face, of whome the one counterfaiteth the rudde of precious stones in the lyppes, the other whytnes of face and necke, whiche is a fyre vnto yonge men, and a foment of lechery, and insamples of vncleane myndes? Howe can she wepe for hir synne, that muste bare hir skynne therewith, and forowe hir face? This apparell is not the couerynge of our lorde, it is the couer of Anticryste. Howe dare she lifte vp towarde heauen that face, that hir maker will not knowe? This saith saynct Hieronime. Howe here the holy martyr sayncte Cipzian. Excedynge gay rayment, and immoderate trimmyng and peyntynge is mete for them that haue set out chastitee to sale, and lightly they that sette littell price by their honestee and goodnesse, are moste desirous of costly apparell. And in the scripture, that god wolde haue vs instruct with al and taught, the citee is discribed an harlot, piked and appareled goodly, that shall perishe together with hir apparel: and specially because of hir apparel. D. Cipti. tract. 2. De habitu Virginum

¶ Nowe what a madnes is to delite in that, whiche euer hath done hurte, and hurteth stylle: and to wene that thou shalte not perysche because of that, whereby

thou knoweste that other haue perysshed. For god made neyther purple, nor crimsin shepe, nor taughte to die with the iuce of herbes: neyther fyne sylkes enbrodred with golde, perles, or precious stones, to hyde the necke in, whiche he made: and to hyde that, whiche god made in man: and shewe that, whiche the deuill hathe founde out and his damned aungelles: whan they felle from the heauenly vertue vnto the earthly contagyousnes, than they taught to peynte the blacke of eies, and ruddynes of chekes, and alter the naturall coloure of the heares and vysage. And verily me thynke, that for the drede that our faithe teacheth vs, and for the loue that brotherhod requireth, not onely maydes, but also wydowes and wyues, shulde be warned, ye and all women in generall, that the worke of god ought not to be defyled with yelowe, or blacke, or redde colours, layde on it. For god saied: Let vs make man after our owne ymage and lykenes. Gen. 1.

Nowe than, howe dare any be so bold to change that, whiche god hath made? For they laie violent hande on god hym selfe, whan they goe aboute to reformme and change that whiche he hath made, not knowynge, that all thynge naturall is the worke of god: and all that is by alteracion, is the worke of the diuyll: As if a counnynge peynter had peynted any bodies pycture counnynglye, expressyng bothe the fourme and qualitees of the bodie, than if any other come and laide to his hand, as thoughe he wolde amende it, shulde not he greatly dismate and offende the fyrste woorke man? Than weneste thou to escape vnpunished, that offendest god the woorke man of thy body? For thoughe thou bee not an adulterer towarde men, yet whan thou corrupteste and marrest

marreſt that, which is goddes doyng, thou art a woꝛſe adulterar: And where thou thynkeſt thy ſelfe gay and well picked, that is a ſtrife ageynſt goddes woꝛke and breakynge of trouthe. Thy loꝛde ſayeth, Thou canſte not make one whyte heare oꝛ blacke, and thinkeſt thou thy ſelfe able to ouercome the woꝛde of thy loꝛd? Thou dieſt thy heare by a bold preſumpcion and vngracious contempte: and aloꝛe hande thou ſygnifieſt thy heare to be ſlamed, and vngoodlye ſinneſte with thy better parte of the, that is thy head. Theſe be ſayncte Cyprians woꝛdes. Mat. 5.

¶ Alſo after theſe preceptes of Chriſten men, I am aſhamed to reherſe oughte out of pagans. I will lay to, only one of the moſte wyſe men Lycurgus, the maker of the lawes of the Lacedemons: whiche whan he wolde haue women of his countrey to be regarded by their vertue, and not their oꝛnamentes, he baniſſhed out of the countrey by the lawe, al peintyng, and commanded out of the towne all crafty menne of pikyuge and apparellyng.

¶ Our loꝛde ſheweth by Oſee the pꝛophet, that the woman, whiche fel vnto adultery, apparelled hir ſelfe with ouches and bꝛouches, that ſhe myght go wayte vpon men, and not hir loꝛde. And if thou apparell thy ſelfe foꝛ god and good folkes, thou arte fayꝛe enough, whan thou arte good: but thou canſte not pleaſe the diuyll, and yll people, excepte thou myniſhe muche of thy naturall fayꝛenes. What ſhuld all that golde dooe to bee woꝛne, as thoughe thou woldeſte ſhewe howe ſtronge thou arte, that canſte beare ſo muche weyght? Weneſt thou to ſeme keyꝛer, nobler, oꝛ wyſer, if thou haue ſoo muche metall vppon the? Nay neuer a whit.

What

what than, thou wylte saie paraduenture, I shall seme the rycher. O vaineſſe of mynde: is that a thought or a saiyng of a chriſten mynde? Thou carieſte ſo muche golde about thy necke, that doeth no good, whan thou denieſt a halfpeny vnto theim that haue nede, and bee an hungred: and robbeſt thy neyghbours, and parauenture thy houſeholde, thy childzen, and thy huſband, that the beines of golde and pzecious ſtones ſhynynge maie dare the eies of theim, that beholde the. Is this Chriſten charitee? Dyddeſte thou ſweare this in thy baptyſme, whan thou laideſt, that thou forſakeſt Satanas and all his pompe? And yet what pompe of Satanas is there, but thou vſeſt it more ſuperfluouſlye, than doeth any pagan? Loke well on thy ſelfe: Thou ſhalt fynde thy ſelfe one of Satanas officers, that vſeſt at home ſo many choſen meates to the full, bulkynge out capons, pertryges, pheſaundes, delycate cakes, potages, ſauſes, and ſoppes, and all coſtely, amonge ſo many of thy poore neyghbours, that die for hunger: thou that liueſt in pleaſures, amonge ſo many labours, and paines of thy neyghbours: thou that goeſt in ſylkes, and fine garmentes, amonge ſo many naked: thou that arte ſo goodly to ſee to, amonge ſo many beggers: Arte thou the diſciple of poore Chriſte, of that facion? Nay nay, thou arte rather the diſciple of ryche Pluto. I wolde not, thou ſhuldeſt go bare necked: nor I wolde not haue the to excedyngly couered, to make a ſhewe of it. Folow Chriſte, by whome thou haſte pleaſure to bee named: folowe his ſobre and meaſurable mother, whome men nowe honour as their ladye, and dyuelles dreade, and ſainctes worſhip: whoſe outwarde garment was courſe clothe and eaſy to gette: and the inner clothing,

thyng, that is to saie: hir herte and mynde gylted with golde, and set with precious stones. Thou canste not be golde of bothe parties: chose which thou wylte haue thy body or thy soule golden. I can not reherse al that longeth to this matter: yet wyll I speake of smelles some thynges.

¶ A Chriſten mynde dothe not preyse vnclenlyneſſe and ſtynke: for Mary Magdalene poured vpon the head of our lorde oyntment of precious spike: wherof all the house smelled: nor that was not vnpleasant vnto our lorde: But these superfluous sauours, and fomentes of the body, whiche the more it is cherished, the more it riseth and rebelleth agaynst the soule, and lyke a tyran ruleth all the man, draweth all vnto vile antasy, where the seate is of his delicatenes. Saynct Hieronyme wryteth thus vnto Demetrias the virgyn: Let a mayde auoyde, as a mischiefe or a poyson of chastitee, yonge menne with heades bussched and trimmed, and swete smellyng skynnes of outlandisshe myse. Wherfore this saiyng of the poet arbiter was spoken:

He is not lyke to sauer well
That euer hath a good smell.

A lyke saiyng hath Marcial.

I had leauer haue no smell,
Than to sauer euer well.

¶ And Plautus sayeth, A woman euer smelleth best, whan she smelleth of nothyng.

¶ But here parauentur some dangerous dame wolde answer, that with hir quicke aunswers hathe gotten a name of wisedome: we must doo some thynge for our byrth and gentyl bloude, and possessions. But what art thou, that so saiest: A chriſten or a pagane? If thou

be a pagane, I wyll not argue with the: if thou be a chriſten woman, wite thou well thou proude woman, that Chriſte knoweth no ſuche difference: that is a poynt of a diuiliſſhe pride, and not of a chriſten mynd. Seeſt thou not, howe that is none apparel, but fedyng of thy pryde? It is an old ſaiyng and a trewe: No beaſt is prouder than a woman wel apparelled. Than wylte thou ſaie, we muſt nedes do ſome thynge for the vſe of the worlde and cuſtomes? Nowe wolde I know, whoſe cuſtome muſt be folowed: If thou name me wyſe men, I graunt: if thou ſaie of fooles, why ſhulde they be folowed but of fooles? And Quintilian ſaieth, thaggrement and conſent of good folkes ought to be called an vſe. Parauenture there is an euyl cuſtome broughte vp: be thou the firſte to laye it downe, and thou ſhalt haue the preyſe of it, and other ſhall folowe thyne enſample. And as the yl enſaumple is brought in of yl folkes and ſtabliſſhed: ſo of good folkes it ſhall be put awaie, and good brought vp. Than if we muſte euer folow the cuſtomes of the world, we ſhall neuer amend, but euer waxe worſe, for than ſhal one fynde an yl vſe, and none maie put it awaie.

Nowe whoſe is that cuſtome, that thou talkeſt of, and of whome was it taken? Of pagane women. Why dooe not we than kepe ſtylle our pagancs lawe? For if thou lyſt bee called Chryſten, vſe maners accordynge therevnto. She is a pagane, and knoweth not god, nor the temperance of liuyng: And thou that knoweſt god, and arte chriſtened, what dooeſt thou more than ſhe? What menteſt thou by that that thou renunceds Satanas with al his pompe, whan thou doeſt not only matche the pagan in Satanas pompe, but alſo paſſeſt hir:

hir: Noꝛ yet thou folowest not thoſe ſad and holy pagans, but the moſt lewde, and lyght, and full of riotte, vice, and miſchiefe. Noꝛ thou folowest not the women of Lacedemon, that were ſo honeſte, whoſe quene, the wyfe of Lyſandꝛe, and hir daughters, whan Dionyſius the kynge of Syꝛacuſe ſent theim riche robes, they anſwered and ſaied: They ſhal do vs moꝛe ſhame than honour. Noꝛ thou folowest not the women of Rome, that were in olde tyme, vnto whome whan kynge Pyꝛrhus ſent his ambaſſadour with ſiluer, and golde, and kercheffes of ſylke, there was none ſo deſirous oꝛ gredy of apparel, oꝛ ſo vnthꝛiftily mynded, to take any. Quinta Claudia, a religious virgin, was reputed foꝛ a mys woman, bycauſe ſhe vſed to were gay rayment. There was in Rome, after the ſeconde warre agaynſt the Cartaginenſes, a law called Opius lawe, that no woman ſhulde weare ouer halfe a nounce of gold: noꝛ weare no dyuers colozed clothyng. Whiche lawe indured vntil the great outragious ſuperfluitee came into the citie, whan women came rennyng foꝛth, as though they had be mad, aſkyng a lycence to weare what they lyſte. But Marcus Cato, the great wyſe man, gaue counſaile contrary, with an oꝛacion full of wyſedome: and .ii. Tribunes ſpake foꝛ them: whoſe folyſhe and feble oꝛacions bee reherſed in Liuie the hiſtoꝛyographer. But the women ouercame with their impoꝛtunitee and buſines, that the bꝛydel of their pꝛide, myght bee lette ſlippe, that they myght do what they luſt: wheꝛof what hurt ſhulde come, Cato tolde befoꝛe: and as in many of his other ſaiynges, lyke wyſe in that he was a true pꝛophet. Foꝛ what man can tell, howe great a loſſe is of chaſtitee, cauſed by this ſtriuynge foꝛ apparel,

parelle, whan euery one is aſchamed to be ouercome of hir felowe in raymente: And whan they bee trymmed and decked, than deſyre they to go fooꝛth amonge men to ſhewe theim ſelfe. And there in is the ſhyppe wꝛacke of chaſtitee.

¶Plutarchus ſaieth, that it is a cuſtome in Egypte, that women ſhoulde weare no ſhowes, becauſe they ſhulde abyde at home. Lykewiſe if thou take from women ſylke, and cloth of gold, and ſiluer, pꝛecious ſtones, and gemmes, thou ſhalte the moꝛe eaſily kepe theim at home. Alſo he reherſeth. ii. ſentences, the one of Sophocles the poete, and the other of Crates the philoſopher. Sophocles ſpeaketh of riche oꝛnamentes thus: That is none oꝛnamente thou wꝛetche, but a ſhame and a manyfeſte ſhewe of thy folye. Crates ſaieth, that is an oꝛnament, whiche exalteth: and a woman is exalted with that, whiche maketh hir moꝛe honeſte: But that doeth neyther golde, noꝛ perle, noꝛ purple, but ſuche thynges, as be ſignes of grauitee, ſobꝛenes, & chaſtitee. ¶Democrates ſaieth, that the adoꝛnamente of a woman ſtandeth in ſcarſitee of ſpeache and apparell. In whiche opinion Sophocles is. And amonge the Grekes this was a common ſaieyng, and in a maner of a pꝛouerbe: The oꝛnament of a woman is not gold, but condicions. Alſo Ariſtotle, the moſt wiſe philoſopher, byddeth women vſe leſſe apparell than the lawe ſuffreth: and he byddeth theim conſyꝛe, that neyther the goodlynes of apparell, noꝛ the excellence of beautie, noꝛ the abundaunce of golde is of ſo great eſtimacion in a woman, as is meaſurablenes and dylygence to lyue well and honeſtly in all thynges. And of the ſame opinion ꝛe the other wiſe men of the pagans: that a chꝛiſten

woman

woman mai e be a ſhamed to kolowe pagans, not thoſe ſage and wyſe men, noꝛ thoſe vertuous and honeſt women, but the errour of kooles, and enſample of madde women. And I confeſſe, that I can not tel, what honeſt colour women maie laie foꝛ their apparell, but onely that they maie ſeme fayꝛer, and entyſe men, whiche weꝛe a ſhame, ye foꝛ Gentyls. Therfoꝛe thou bothe ſerueſte thy pꝛyde, and ſetteſt the deuylles nettes in thy bodye, to catche with all the ſoules of theim, that beholde the. Thou woman, not a Chꝛiſtiane, but the miniſter of the diuyll, the kelle thꝛetnyng of our loꝛde diſpleaſed with the, ſhall be pꝛonounſed vpon the, ſaiyng by Eſaie the pꝛophet: Our loꝛde ſhall make balde the heades of the daughters of Sion, and in ſtede of oꝛnament thei ſhall haue ſhame, and foꝛ their ſhowes, and ſlyppers, and cheynes, pꝛecious ſtones, pommanders, and glaſſes, and ſwete ſauours, they ſhall haue ſtynke: and foꝛ their gyꝛdelles, they ſhall haue ropes: and foꝛ their criſpe heare, they ſhall haue balde patis. Theſe woꝛdes our loꝛde ſaied of women. Eſaie.3.

¶ And the holye martyꝛ ſaincte Cypꝛian ſaieth: There be ſome ryche women and abundant in goodes, whiche beare their treaſure on theim, and ſaie they muſte vſe theyꝛ goodes. Firſt let theim knowe, that ſhe is ryche, that is riche in god: and ſhe is abundant of poſſeſſions, that is abundant in Chꝛiſte: and thoſe be good, that be ſpirituall, diuine, and heauenly, whiche ſhall abyde with vs in perpetuall poſſeſſion. But and thou arraie thy body ſumptuouſly, and goe gayly fooꝛthe abꝛode, and entyſe the eies of theim that beholde the, and dꝛawe the ſyght of yonge men after the, and noꝛiſche the luſt of concupiſcence, and kyꝛe and kendle the ſinel of ſynne, in ſo

much that thoughe thou perysche not thy selfe, yet thou shalte cause other to perysche, and make thy selfe as a poysoner and a swoꝛde vnto theim that se the: thou canst not be excused as chaste in mynde, thyne euyll and vnchaste rayment shall repꝛoue the, neyther thou canste not be counted among maidens and virgins of Chꝛist that so liuist, that men shal loue the inoꝛdinatly. Thou bostest thy possessiõs and virginitee: but a virgin shuld not boste hir ryches, seynge that holy scripture sauthe:

Sap. 5. what hath pꝛyde auayled vs? Oꝛ what good hathe the bost of ryches done vs? Al they be passed as a shadowe. Thou sayest thou arte riche, and thynkest that thou must vse those thynges, that god wolde thou shuldest haue. Use them, why not? But yet in goodnes and good wayes, vse theym in suche thynges as god commanded, and as our loꝛde taught. Let theim sele thy ryches that haue nede, let theim knowe the to be of power: get winnynges vnto Chꝛist of thy patrimony, fede god. This saieth the martyꝛ sayncte Cyppꝛian. whiche thynges are a great deale better foꝛ a chꝛisten woman to know and do, than that the pagans do: and it were mete foꝛ theim to take hede vnto the phyloso-phers, and not to folow the dedes of fooles, and apply vnto the fantasies of madde folkes, excepte we wolde spende our lyfe madly and foolishly.

¶ But here some man wolde saie: what, woldest thou haue women to be filthy and sluttisshe? Nay verely, I wolde not haue them so: noꝛ my pꝛeceptes be not so vnclene: noꝛ I lyke not sluttyshnes. And what maner a ones they shuld be, saynt Peter and saint Paule, two defenders of the churche, teache in two shoꝛte pꝛecep-

1. Pet. 3. tes. Saynt Peter sayth: Let not the outwarde appa-

rel

rel of women be decked with ỹ braidyng of hir heare, nor with wrappyng of golde about it, or goodly clothyng: but the mynde and the conscience, that is not sene with eies, if it be pure and quiet, that is a goodly thynge, and excellent afore god. And sayncte Paule sayth: women in their array shoulde apparell theym selfe with shamefastnes and sobrenes: and not with braidyng of their heares, or golde, or perles, or precious clothyng: but as women ought to dooe, let theim shewe vertue by good workes. Whan the apostles saie these woordes, they bydde not women be sluttisshe and slubbered: nor foule with dyrte and clowtes: but they counsaile theim from superfluous rayment, and wyl theim to vse mean clothyng, and suche as is easy to come by. For mesurablenes hath his clennes, and that far more pure than the great excesse hath, as it is more easy to kepe a lytel vessel than a great meany. Let hir not be clothed with veluet, but with wollen: nor with silke, but lynnen, and that course. Let not hir rayment shyne, ne let it not be sluttish, neyther let it not be to be wondred on: nor let it not be to be lothed: as for the wearing of gold, or siluer, or perle, or precious stones, I se not what it is good for, saupng that the vertue of some stones is more set by than ỹ shewe, as coral or emeraude: if at lest way those lytel thinges haue so muche vertue in them as men say. But nowe mo seke them for vanitee, that he may seme more riche, than for ỹ vertu. Nor let hir not peynt nor anoynt hir face, but wash it & make it clene: nor dye hir heare, but come it clenly. Nor lette hir not suffer hir head to be full of scurfe: nor let hir not delyte to washe it in swete sauours: nor to kepe it stynkynge: nor loke in a glasse to peynte hir, or trymme hir gayly by: but

1. Timo. 2

to haue

to haue awaie, if any foule thyng or vncomly be on hir head, that she could not els se: and than lette hir aray hir selfe therby, lest any thyng be in hir face to defoule hir, beyng els chast and sobre. Fynally, that whiche Socrates badde his scholers, lette hir thynke spoken vnto hir to, that they shulde loke them in a glasse, and if they were fayre, that they shoulde se leste the mynde were foule: and if they were foule, that with the beautee of the mynde they shulde counterpeyse the deformitee of body. More ouer, let an honest mayde remembre stil, that beautie hathe brought many of theym that haue had it, in great pryde: and many of theym that haue sene it, into abhominable synne. Wherfore many holy women haue labored to seme lesse fayre than they were. As for this nedeth not to byd I suppose, that a woman shall vse no mannes rayment, elles let hir thynke she hath the mans stomacke, but take hede to the wordes of our lorde, saiyng: A woman shall not put on mannes apparell: for so to dooe is abhominable afore god. But I truste no woman wyl dooe it, excepte she be past bothe honestee and shame.

Deut. 22.

Of the liuyng alone of a virgin. Cap. x.

Holy writers say, that death goth into the soule by the senses of the body like wyndowes: except a man be wysely ware. Folkes be toled and entyced with the pleasures of the worlde: where with also the soule is caughte and holden. Therfore a mayde shulde go but seldome abrode: because she neyther hath any businesse forthe, and standeth euer in ieoperdye of hir chastitee, the moste precious thynge that she hath. And let hir wayte vpon hir mother, not onely whan she

gothe

gothe forthe, but also at home: whiche thinge theyr mothers muste also be charged with.

¶ Saincte Hieronyme counsayleth Leta, that whan she gothe to hir maner place in the countrey, she doo not leaue hir daughter in hir house within the citee: lette hir not canne ne maie to lyue without you saieth he: and whan she is alone, let hir keare. Whiche saiyng I wold haue thus vnderstande, that the mother shulde take hir daughter awaie with hir, if she tary any whyles. For els it is no nede to take hir daughter with hir, as ofte as she goth forth: and specially if she go to any feastes, or mariages, or metynge of men, or any other lyke place, that she muste go to, or to fulfyll hir husbandes pleasure: where it is not mete for hir daughter to goe: and lette there bee at home some good woman keper of hir chastitee. For there is no greatter mischiefe, than that that is breade at home, nor more ieoperdous. How shalt thou auoyde that, excepte thou eschewe it vtterly: what auayleth it to saue the wodde frome all harme, whan there is a worme within, that eateth it:

¶ I knowe a very good woman, whiche was made the ouer sear of maydes, that woulde not correcte and take awaie hir sonnes, whan they played somewhat wantonly with wenches, because she loued theim somewhat tenderly, nor kepe frome harmynge of theyr chastitee. Wherefore it is to bee taken heede of, that the woman, whome the mayde is put in truste to, haue no wanton sonnes, nor bretherne, whome she dare not be agaynst. Lette hir not be onely chaste, but also in countenaunce and grauitee, bothe of wysedome, maners, and speache, woorthy to be hadde in reuerence: whose eies and loke they will be aferde of, and not onely theyr speache: Ye

and though they be hir elder brethern, that she feare nothynge in doynge hir duetee of watche and keppyng: So that she make al thing belōgyng vnto hir chastitee, safe with hir presence: and suche as wolde tolle theym vnto wantonnes and vice, with hir example is for to be dryuen far awaie. But she that wyll be hyred of a louer, to prouoke, to moue with speche and woordes, lacketh the name of a reasonable creature: For that is a diuilliſshe thyng: whiche a maide shall flee fro, lyke as shee wolde frome an adder or a serpente: whiche all folkes shulde dryue out of the countrey as a common distruction of theim all. It can not be tolde, how much mischiefe suche women becauſe of. Therfore let not a mayde ones abyde the syghte of suche women. For they be very cocatrices: and inspire poyson with their loke, and slea with the only beholdyng. Nor lette any man thynke, that I speake this as a similitude beyond the very trouthe: For some be so craftye, that they can catche one with a loke, without woordes, and some vse inchantementes and charmes: where of there be many examples. Also with the onely loke and salutynge, this serpent casteth a blot on the ponge woman, vnto whome she speaketh and loketh, namely there as suche a woman is knowen: beſyde the shame that she causeth in that house, that she resorteth vnto. Therefore let the mayde flee vnto hir mother, as vnto hir saynctuary, and shewe vnto hir, what that vngracious body wold haue done: or els so auoyde and keepe hir selfe frome hir, that they that see it, maie perceyue by hir cheere, that she feareth the mischeuousnes of that woman: and so she shall dooe hir selfe good with the dede, and other with hir exaumple, whan shee sheweth other maides,

maides, what they ought to feare in that woman. It were good for the common welthe, that inquisition were made of olde poore women, that the ruler of the citee myght knowe, howe they gette their liuyng.

¶ Also of the seruantes saint Hieronime saith, I wolde she shulde loue none of hir maides more than an other, in whose eare she shulde vse to rowne and tytle often. What so euer she saieth to one, let al here it: Let hir bee content with a maide not pyked, and fayre, and wanton, that can synge a balade with clere voyce: but sad, pale, and vntrimmed. Also he saieth vnto Demetrias: Se that none of hir felowes dooe hir harme, either with nyce rayment, or wanton woordes.

¶ Haue nought to dooe with suche women, that haue pleasure to bee sene, and loued, and make their boste, that they haue suche a fayre louer, or ryche, or noble: and beareth about letters sent frome hym, and other whyle sheweth theim vnto their companions, or telle his dedes, or reherse his woordes: This he dyd, this he saied to me: thus he cometh to me, thus he praysed me: auoyde theim awaie, be they neuer soo nere neighbours, be they neuer so ryche, bee they frendes, kyns folkes, alyans, yea though they be thy systers, refuse theym. For they be bytten of the woode dogge the diuyll: and be fallen woode their selfe: wherin there is no name so dere, that shulde or ought to bryng a maide to their company, but rather the mother shuld kyll the child, and the sister the brother, and the brother the sister, and sister the sister, and brother the brother. Therfore the maide that wil dooe by my counsayle, shal passe the tyme with chosen virgins, lyke hir selfe: and in good and honest pastimes, and other whyles with holy re-

dynge or communicacion, of suche thynges as she hath redde: but let hir talke nothyng of daunsynge, or feastynge, or pleasures, least hir companions bee moued with some false colour of delite: nor let no man be by. And whan she is left of hir felowes in hir chaumbre alone, let hir not be vtterly idel, for it is ieoperdous to be idel, specially beyng alone. Nor I wolde she shulde suffre hir mynde to muse, thoughe it be neuer so good and holy at the beginnyng. The mynde of a woman is vnstable, and abideth not longe in one place, it falleth frome the good vnto the bad without any labour. And Syrus the poet semeth not al without a cause to haue saied. A woman that thynketh alone, thynketh euyl. Nor Mary Magdelene, whiche sate at the foote of our lorde, and herde his woorde, dyd not onely vse the contemplacion of heauenly thynges, but she dyd that whether she redde or herde, or prayde. And so shal (by mine aduise) not only a maide, but also any woman. For in many places of this boke we geue preceptes for all women in generall. Therfore on the holy daie let hir eyther rede, or pray, whan she is alone: and on the woorkynge dayes likewyse, or els let hir worke. And it is no doubt, but the aungell founde Mary doynge some suche thynge, whiche was afrayde, whan she sawe a mans face, where she was not wont. Therfore she is called in Ebrewe Alma, that is as ye wolde saie, a virgin closed in. And this is she that Esaye the prophet speaketh of in these woordes: Be holde a virgin closed vp shall conceyue and beare god and man. And onely that maide conceyueth Christe, whome fewe knowe, but only Christe. Therfore shall the mayde let no man into the house at home, but whome hir father by speci-

Esaie. 7.

all

al wordes commaundeth to be let in: and in proces of tyme she shall begynne to helpe to ease hir mother of hir laboure in the house. Whome, and hir father to gether, she shall haue moste dere of all thynges nexte god. And if they commaunde their daughter to go in hande with wolle or flax, or any handy worke, she shall not onely except their commaundement without grutchyng, but also gladly, and with mery chere, and that the more diligently and featly, if the father and mother gette any parte of their liuyng thereby: and than shall she thynke hir selfe happy, and thynke that she rewardeth them, that she shuld of duetee, and to norysh them ageyne, that haue norished hir.

¶ Whan a maide mate for housholde busynes be alone, and pray, firste let hir geue hir selfe holy to god, let hir worshyp Christe and his mother, and aske perdone and peace of theim, and than consider hir selfe to be a christen virgin, Christes spouse, and the folower of Mary: and that the virginitee of the body is nought worthe, except the mynd be pure with al, and if that be, nothynge to be more clene, nothyng more pleasure to god: and hir selfe to be the folower of the moste holy mother of our lorde. And fyrst of all let hir countrefete hir excellente vertue, that sobreneſſe and humilitee of mynde, whiche was so great, that whan she hadde all thynges most goodly and excellent, yet was she neuer the more hygh mynded or proude: The moste noble maide that had of hir lynage. xiiii. kynges, and soo many dukes of Israel, commen of suche a noble kyn and ryche, also hir selfe made ryche of the wyse men, hir selfe moste fayre, moste wyse, and well learned, and yet for all that, howe euen a mynd dyd she beare, howe

humble opinion she had of hir selfe. Also knowynge of the heauenly byrth, beyng mother of suche a sonne: yet disdeigned she not to haue a carpenter to hir husbande, and to doo hym seruice, and to go se hir kinnes woman, and to be with hir at hir labozyng, and serue hir: she dyd set no moze by hir selfe, than by any other: noz disdeigned none other, in comparison to hir selfe, neyther foz hir kyn, noz beautee, noz wyt, noz dignitee: but she thought hir selfe wozse than any other, whan she was in dede better than angels, whose queene shee was ozdeyned to bee. Wherfoze I holde not with it, that our lady shulde be peincted so in silkes and golden garmentes, and decked with gemmes and perles, as thoughe she had had any delite in suche thynge, whan she was in earth here: but nothynge lesse repzesenteth hir, and I had leauer she shulde be poztured in a symple aray, and suche as she vsed in dede, that we myght haue afoze our eies the humilitee of hir mynde moze plainly, that it mought be an ensample to teache ryche men, and to comfozte the poore: and that the poore mens stomackes maie increase, and the ryche decrease, and both their stomackes be bzoughte to a reasonable meane, that neyther the ryche men dispeire: noz the poze be ouer bolde to truste ouer muche. Therfoze by my counsayle the maide shal folowe hir example, not with a feignyng and a dissemblynge mynde, but true and stedfaste, lest there be a wozse vice lyeng vnder a colour of vertue, as it were a poyson vnder an holsome thyng, oz a soze vnder an hole skynne.

¶ Let women vse no feignyng, noz clokyng, to seme good with all: noz let theim not thynke, that they can cloke, oz els chaunge the nature of thynges: the counterfete

terkete is not lyke the very thinge, the couered and shadowed is feble and vnsure, and shall bee at laste open and knowen. Therfore let a ponge woman be in dede, as she sheweth demure, humble, sobre, shamefaste, chaste, honest, and vertuous, bothe let hir seme so, and bee so: and let hir praie vnto the holy virgin, whome she shall truely representente with hir lyuynge, and bee therfore the more pleasant vnto hir, and also vnto Christe, that shall aknowlage hir his spouse: let hir praie fyrst for hir selfe, that she maie be encreased in vertue, and purpose of hir holy chastitee, and other vertues: secondely for hir father and mother, bretherne, sisterne, and kyns folkes, and other, for whom hir duetie is to praie. For hir praier shall be most acceptable vnto god, and moste effectuous to obteyne, because it commeth of a pure and a holy mynde, and moste christiane. I wolde she shulde either vnderstande what she praieth, or els speake in that langage, that she dothe vnderstande: or what so euer she praieth in latine, let hir gette it declared vnto hir in hir owne tonge before, of some body. Nor let hir not wene, that praier standeth in the murmuring and wagging of the lyppes, but in the herte and mynde, whan she lyfteth vp hir mynde frome these vile thynges in earth, vnto heauenly and diuine thynges. And where we be commanded in the masse, where it is saied, Sursum corda, that is as muche to saie, as vp our hertes: we answere, Habemus ad dominum, that is to saye, we haue vnto our lorde: In whiche answere full many lye, that whan they saie so, thynke in dede vpon some worldly busynes. But Christe saieth, that true worshyppers be these, that worship the father in spirite: and that this worshippynge is moste pleasaunt vnto hym, and this prayer Ioan. 4.

moste

moste acceptable. Therfore let hir see, that hir thought and mynde discorde not from hir wordes: let hir speake the same within, that she speaketh without, ye and hold hir tongue outwardly and she will, or talke of other matters, so that she crie vnto god inwardely, and saie
Cant. 5. with the spouse, I slepe, and my herte waketh.

Of the vertues of a woman, and examples that she shoulde folowe. Cap. xi.

A VVOMAN shall learne the vertues of hir kynde all together out of bokes, whiche shee shall eyther read hir selfe, or elles heare read. And it becommeth euery woman to bee indewed with all kynde of vertue, but some bee necessary for hir: as all vyce is shamefull, and some abominable and cursed: and some vertues bee for wyues, some for wydowes, some for religious women, but I will speake of suche as belong vnto the holle kynde of women.

Chastitee. First let hir vnderstande, that Chastitee is the principall vertue of a woman, and countrepeyseth with all the reste: if she haue that, no man will loke for any other: and if she lacke that, no man will regarde other. And as the Stoicke philosophers reken, that all goodnes standeth in wisedome: and all yll in foly, in soo muche that they saied, onely the wise man to be ryche, free, a kynge, a citesyn, faire, bolde, and blessed: and a foole, poore, a thrall, an outlawe, a straunger, foule, a cowherde, and wretched: lykewise it is to be iudged of Chastitee in women, that she that is chaste is faire, well fauoured, riche, fruitful, noble, and all best thinges that can be named: and contrarie, she that is vnchaste, is a

see

see and treasure of all vices: Now Shamfastnes and Sobrenes be the inseparable companions of Chastitee, in so muche that she can not be chaste, that is not ashamed: for that is as a couer and a vaile of hir face. For whan nature had ordeyned, that our faces shoulde be open and bare of clothes, she gaue it the vaile of shamfastnes, where with it shulde be couered, and that for a great commendacion, that who so dydde loke vpon it, shuld vnderstand some great vertu to be vnder that couer: nor no man shulde see it couered with that vaile, but he shulde loue it: nor none see it naked of that, but he shulde hate it. Our lorde curseth an vnchast woman, saiyng: Thou haste the face of an harlot, thou arte past shame. Hiere. 3.

Of shamefastnes cometh demurenes and mesurablenes: that whether she thynke ought, or saie, or do, uothyng shall be outragious, neyther in passyons of mynde, nor woordes, nor dedes, nor presumptuous, nor nyce, wanton, pierte, nor bostyng, nor ambicious. And as for honours she wyll neyther thynke hir selfe woorthy, nor desyre theim, but rather flee them: and if they chaunce vnto hir, she wyll bee ashamed of theim, as of a thynge not deserued, nor be for nothynge hygh minded, neyther for beautee, nor prosperenes, nor kynred nor ryches, beyng sure that they shall sone perysshe, and that pride shall haue euerlastyng peyne.

Sobrenes

Nowe Sobrenes kepeth continence, lyke as Dronkennes & excesse driueth it out. Euery mã wotteth what foloweth surfet. And vnto sobrenes is ioyned measurable and Sklender dyet, whiche thynges be in housholding the womans parte, as Plato and Aristotle say full well. The man getteth, the woman saueth and kepeth. Therfore he hath stomacke geuen hym to gether

Slender diet.

ther lustely, and she hath it taken from hir, that she may warely keepe. And of this Sobrenes of body cometh sobrenesse of mynde: nor the fantasies of the mynd shall as they were dronken, trouble and disease the quietnes of vertue, but that she maie bothe thynke well and dooe well.

¶Let hir applye hir selfe to vertue, and be contente with a littel, and take in worth that she hath, nor seke for other, that she hath not, nor for other folkes: where of ryseth enuy, hate, or curiositee of other folkes matters. The deuocion of holy thynges mooste agreeth for women. Therfore it is a farre worse syghte of a woman, that abortreth deuocion. She muste haue muche stryfe with enuye, whiche is bothe a folysshe vice and shameful in women, and yet I wotte not howe it assauteth them the moste sore: but she that is of good behauoure, and hathe enoughe to serue hir with, shall haue no cause to enuy other, nor to be curious in an other bodies house: and she that is shamefast, sobre, and resonable of mind, shall neyther be ragious angrie, nor falle to railynge, cruelty, or beastlyneesse. For whan it is naturall for women to be kynde and gentyll, because they bee feble, and nede the ayde of other, who can be contente with outragious ire and crueltee in a woman? In so muche that she wolde spyll that she can not saue, if nede were, and to kepe hir vengeable mynde vnto tyme and occasion of reuengeance? Suche a woman were woorthy to haue so muche peyne, that she shulde be euen oppressed and bruised with noumbre and weyghte of it, and graunte hir selfe ouer comen, and leaue hir mind of angre, vengeance, and other inadnes. For a foolysh woman striueth euen with wylde beastes in angre and

enuy-

enuy, because their tendre and lyght myndes thynke euery offence peynfull and intollerable, and worthy to be greuously punished: and small and lyght matters seme great and greuous vnto folyshe folkes. Therfore excepte a woman either eschewe by crafte, or ouercome by power suche felle ennemyes, it is ieoperdy, least she be distroyed, and haue euerlastynge peyne, bothe in this lyfe, and in an other.

¶ Nowe I suppose it be shewed playnly enoughe, that Chastitee is as the queene of vertues in a woman, and that two inseperable companions euer folowe it, and that of shamefastnes commeth Sobrenesse, of whiche two comme all the other sort of vertues longyng vnto women, Demurenes, Measure, Frugalitee, Scarsitee, Diligence in house, Cure of deuocion, Mekenes, which vertues I shall declare all largely in an other place: and she shall fynde them al more abundantly intreated of holy and wyse men.

¶ Beholde the image of Honestee drawen in picture, whiche is so goodly and so excellent of beautee, that if it coulde be sene with our corporall eies, as Plato saieth in the boke called Phedo, it wolde take folkes wonderously with the loue of it selfe. For no beautee dothe so enamour our eies, and taketh and holdeth, as Honestie shulde bothe take and leade with hir, if she were opened and shewed vnto vs.

¶ Also the mayde shall gether by heryng and redynge holye examples of virgins, whiche she maie folowe, whome she maie desyre and labour to be lyke, and specially, as I haue saied, the moste excellente and flowre of virginitee our lady, the mother of Christe, god and man: whose lyke, not only maydes haue for an exam-

ple to forme and fashen them selfe after, but also wyues and wydowes. For she hath been all thynge vnto all folkes, to prouoke all and brynge theim vnto the example of hir chastitee: vnto virgins the moste demure virgin: vnto wyues, the moste chaste wyfe: and vnto wydowes, the moste deuout wydowe. She was the fyrste that toke this straunge waie of virginitee with a bolde stomacke and holy purpose: she was the fyrste that lyued aboue the worldly custome in maryage, an angelles lyfe, without carnall vse: in so muche that she toke hir a keper of hir chastitee, rather than an husbande: whiche because they were wonders. Therfore brought she forth a sonne more wonderfully, that nature wondred on. And whan she was wydowe, because she lyued all in spiryte, she lyft vp hir selfe aboue the nature of the body, yet liuyng in the body, hauynge in god a sonne most obedient, and moste chaste spouse, and moste cheryshyng father, that because she forsake all thynge for god, she myght fynde all thynge in god. But what dooe I holy virgin? what dooe I enterprise to speake of thyne infinite preyse? Nay nay, that is not for my dul witte, and rudenes of langage, or this lytle roume, we had nede of great time and leisure ther vnto, and prompte eloquence, and wyt and counnyng moste excellente. But you virgins folowe hir, as many as wyll keepe your virginitee safe and holle. Folowe hir wyues, as many as care for the pleasyng of your husbandes, and lyste performe that ye haue sworne. You wydowes deholde hir, in whome you shall haue bothe frutefull consolacion of the losse of your husband, and counsayle of kepynge your chyldren, and example of leadyng the residue of your lyfe. There hath folowed

this

this virgins ordre mightie great companies of our thousandes, as the spalmist saied, There shall be virgins brought vnto the kynge after hir: whose actes shall profette not onely them that are nowe, but also all that shal come hereafter in example. And histories dooe tel of pagane virgins, that were famous only by chastitee. Of whome sainct Hieronime, writyng agaynst Iouinian, grutched not to reherse a great nombre out of the histories of the greekes, because he sawe that in this maner of matters folkes wyll bee moued muche with examples. For it semeth not veraie harde to do it that sometyme hathe be dooen. And he reciteth many, that had leauer lose their lyues than their virginitee. Nor I wyll not dooe suche a displeasure vnto that most auncient and holy manne, as eyther to passe as superfluous that he hathe tolde, or to reherse it vnder other maner, but by and by wryte here as he hathe put in his boke. Psal. 44.

¶ So than saieth he in this wyse. The thirty tyrans in Athens, whan they had slayne Phedon at a banket, they commaunded his doughters yonge maydes, to be brought vnto them, and to be stripped naked lyke harlottes, and to playe on the flooze blody of their fathers blode, with vncomly and wanton gestures: whiche for a whyle dissemblyng the countenance of their sorowe, after that they sawe the folkes mery with drynke, they went forthe, as it were to dooe their naturall necessitee, and enbrasyng one an other caste downe them selfe in to a welle, that they myght saue their virginitee.

¶ An other, doughter vnto Demotio the prynce of the Ariopagites, whan shee herde that hir spouse Leosthenes was slayne, whiche had been the cause of La-

mpance warre, shewe hir selfe, affirmyng that thoughe hir body was yet vntouched of any manne, neuer the lesse if she were maried vnto any after, she shulde haue as it were a seconde husbande, because in mynde shee was maryed vnto the kyng.

¶ The Spartanes, and the Messenianes had frendeshyp and confederacion together longe tyme, in soo muche that they vsed to sende either vnto other virgins to dooe certayne sacrifyce. So on a season, whan the Spartanes had sente fiftie virgins, and the Messenyanes wolde haue defloured theim: of all that great numbre was not one founde, that wold consent to that abhominable deede, but all dyed gladly for their chastitee. Wherfore many a daie there was great warre betwene theym, and in longe space Aetmertia, one of their cities was destroyed.

¶ Aristoclides the tyran of Orchomene loued a maide of the citee of Stymphalis, which whan hir father was kylled, fledde vnto the temple of Dyane, and enbraced the image, nor coude not be drawen from thens agayne, but was slayne in the same place. For whome all the land of Arcady was so sore moued, that they made open warre to reuenge the maydes deathe.

¶ Aristomenes of Messene, a good & a iust man, whan he had conquered the Lacedemonians, and on a tyme as they kepte a festiuitee in the nyght, which they called Hiacinthina, toke awaie .xb. maydens that were playenge in company there, and went all nyght a pace, fleeynge out of the countrey with theim: and whan some of his men wolde haue defloured theim, he charged them, as well as he coude, that they shuld not do so: and at the laste some that wolde not obey, he put to deathe, to

feare

keare the reste with all. After, whan these maydes were redemed ageyne by their frendes, and they sawe this Aristomenes sewed for the death of a man, they wolde neuer go home, but laie prostrate at the fete of the iudges, vntyll they see hym quytte, that was defender of their chastitee.

¶ Howe shulde we sufficiently preyse the doughters of Scedasus of Leuctres, a towne of the coūtrey of Boece, whiche their father beyng from home, as we rede, had receyued two younge men by the waie of hospitalitee, and they dronke with ouer muche wyne, in the nyght rauished the maydes, whiche whan they had loste their virginitee, wolde lyue no longer, but kyld one an other.

¶ Also the maides of Locrean be worthy to be spoken of, that hadde a custome in their countreis, to bee sende yerely vnto Ilium: whiche custome hadde continued a thousand yere, nor yet was there neuer herd tel, that any had any report a name of disteignyng their virginitee.

¶ who can let passe vnspoken of the. vii. maides of Milesye, whiche whan the frenche men destroyed al about their countrey, killed them selfe, leste they shulde be compelled to any villany, leauynge an example vnto al virgins, that vnto an honest mynd the chast pureness of bodye ought to be more regarded than the lyfe.

¶ Nycanor after he had conquered Thebes, the citee, was taken in the loue of a maide, that he had taken prisoner, and wolde haue maried hir, whiche thyng myght haue pleased a poore prisoner: but she sette more by hir virginitee, than by his kyngdome, and there kylled hir selfe. Whiche thyng he made great sorowe for, holdyng the deade body in his armes.

¶ Greke writers tel of an other mayde of Thebes, that whan

whan hir enneimie a Macedone had deflowred hir, a whyle she dissembled hir angre, and after founde the corrupter of hir virginitee slepyng, whom she slewe, and after that hir selfe, for ioye that she had auenged hir selfe of that abhominable vilanye: nor she wolde lyue no longer, than she had hir virginitee: nor dye, tyl she had auenged hir chastitee. Also this saieth sayncte Hieronyme. Therfore christen women maie be ashamed, if any shame were in them, that do not kepe their chastitee truly: liuynge vnder the most chaste Christe, son of the moste chaste mother, and in the moste chaste church, and saythe, seyng that pagans, worshippers of filthy Iupiter, and baudy Venus, haue sette more by their chastitee, than all other thynges.

¶ Where to shulde I recyte here the examples of holy virgins, to moue them with, that be not ashamed, that chaste pagans shulde be ones named: whome shulde I specially shewe theim to folowe example of amonge so many thousandes, Tecla, or Hagnes, Catharine, Lucia, or Cecile, Agatha, Barbara, or Margarita, or Dorothe, or rather the holle flocke of the .xi. thousande virgins, whiche all had leauer dye, than they? enemyes shulde do their cursed pleasure with theim? Thou shalt skarse fynde two men, that shall so stedfastly agree in that holy purpose: wherin .xi. thousand tendre virgins were so fast and stable. There were infinite in numbre, that had leauer be kylled, headed, strangled, downed, or haue their thrates cut, than lose their chastitee, which whan they coulde not slea theim selfe, yet they sought craft to come by their death, whan they were in ieoperdye of their chastitee, as Rasilla, a noble mayde, borne in Dirrhache, a citee of Italy, whiche whan she saw hir

ennemy

ennemy come to be rafte hir of hir virginitee, promised vnto hym, that if she wolde do hir no vilany, she wolde geue hym an herbe, where of if he were annoynted with the iuse, no weapon shulde perce hym: the man of warre was content with the offre. So she wente in to the nexte garden, and there toke vp an herbe, the fyrste that came to hande, and badde hym auenture the fyrste proke on hir selfe, of the vertue of the herbe, and annoynted hir throte there with, and bad hym smyte, to assaie: so he smote, and kylled hir. Neither sainct Hieronyme disalloweth, that a woman kylle hir selfe, to saue hir chastitee with. And saincte Ambrose in the. iii. boke, that he writeth of virgins, layeth againste this doubte the example of Pelagey the martyr, saiyng, There nedeth none other confirmacion, where we haue the deede of a virgine and a martyr, of fyftene yeres of age, whiche with hir mother and hir sisters together, caste hir selfe in to a water.

¶ Saincte Euseby in the Ecclesyasticall historie saieth, that one Sophronia a noble woman, whan she sawe hir husbande that was the chyefte officer of the citee afferde, and vnable to defende hir goodnes againste the foule and vnlawfulle pleasure of Maximyne the emperoure, closed hir selfe in hir chambre, and there kylled hir selfe: and yet the churche hath alowed hir for a martyr. All these examples of chastitee be readde in the churche.

¶ Howe dare an vnchaste and naughtie woman come thyther, nor be abasshed to bringe a brothelry in to the company of virgins, and defyle those pure eyes with hir fylthy lokes, and polute tendre yeres with hir corrupte voyces? Thou vngracious woman, darst thou

name Catharin, Hagnes, or Barbara, and kyle those holy names with thyne vnpure mouthe? Darste thou name thy selfe by any of those names, and make thy selfe in name lyke vnto theim, to whome thou arte so vnlyke to in condicions, and a verate deadly enemie? Nor cometh it not to thy remembraunce, whan thou herest thy selfe called, what maner one she was, whose name thou beareste? And whan thou remembrest, that she was so pure, chaste, and good, and againe thy selfe so vnpure, vnchaste, and vngracious, dodest thou not rage daie and nyght, for thought and repentaunce? O thou moste shameles of all women, howe darste thou halowe the natiuitee of the moste pure virgin, that arte thy selfe vnworthy euer to be borne? And darste thou shewe thy shameleste face vnto hir moste demure eyes? And wouldeste thou haue hir to heare or loke at the so ouer couerte with naughtines, whiche whan she was in this worlde, was neuer wonte to see nor here no man, not thoughe they were full good? It were better for the neuer to come into their syght, leaste they auenge on the, the iniurye of theyr kynde: nor to name thy selfe by their names, leaste they punishe the for filyng their names. And I speake in ernest, for here is no place to bourde in: there shulde be made some decre, that none vnhoneste woman shulde be called Mary. For why, do not we geue as muche honoure vnto that name, whome all we arise and make reuerence vntyll, as the pagans gaue vnto some of their folkes. For in Athenes, whan Hermodius and Aristogiton had banished the tyrannes out of the citee, there was by a decre determined, that no bonde man, nor any that occupied any vile crafte, shulde be named by their names.

howe

How the maide shall behaue hir selfe forth abrode. Cap. xii.

FOR THE she muste nedes go sometymes, But I wolde it shulde be as selde as maie be, for many causes. Principally because as ofte as a maide gothe forth amonge people, so often she cometh in iudgement and extreme peril of hir beautie, honestie, demurenes, witte, shamfastnes, and vertue. For nothyng is more tender, than is the fame and estimacion of women, nor nothyng more in daunger of wronge: in so muche that it hath be saied, and not without a cause, to hange by a copweb, because those thynges, that I haue rehersed, be required perfet in a woman: and folkes iudgementes bee dangerous to please, and suspicious: and as Ouide saith, we be quicke enoughe in beleuynge the yll. And as Cicero saieth: Nothynge fleeth more swiftly than an yll woorde, nothyng gothe soner forthe, nothyng is soner taken, nor broder spreade. That if a sklaunder ones take holde in a maydes name by folkes opinion, it is in a maner euerlastynge, nor can not be washed awaie withoute great tokens and shewes of chastitee and wysedome. If thou talke littel in company, folkes thynke thou canste but littell good: if thou speake muche, they reken the lyght: if thou speake vncunnyngly, they count the dul witted: if thou speake counnyngly, thou shalte be called a shrewe: if thou aunswere not quickly, thou shalt be called proude, or yll brought vp: if thou answere, they shall saie thou wylte be sone ouer comen: if thou sitte with demure countenaunce, thou arte called a dissembler: if thou make muche mouynge, they wyll call the foolishe: if thou loke on any syde, than will they saie, thy mynde is there: if thou

Ouide.

Cicero.

laughe whan any man laugheth thoughe thou do it not a purpose, streyght they wyll saie thou haste a fantasye vnto the man and his saiyng, and that it were not great maistry to wynne the. Wherto shulde I tel, howe much occasion of vice and naughtynes is abrode: Wherfore the poet semeth to haue saied not without a cause: It is not lefull for maydes to be sene abrode. How muche were it better to abyde at home, than go forth and here so many iudgementes, and so dyuers vpon the, and be in so many ieopardies? For there is none, that hadde more nede to folow this greke saiyng, Liue vnknowen. Therfore Tucydides saied, she was the beste woman, of whome was leaste talke, either vnto hir prayse, or hir dispraise. A woman shulde be kepte close, nor be knowen of many, for it is a token of no great chastitee or good name, to be knowen of many, or be songen about in the citee in songes, or to be marked or named by any notable marke, as white, lame, gogle eied, lyttell great, fat, mayned, or stuttyng, these ought not to be knowen abrode in a good woman.

¶ Why than saie some, shulde we neuer walke out of our owne doores? Shulde we euer lye at home? that were as though we shulde lye in prison. For soo dothe some proud fooles take this saiyng, that desire to se and to be sene. Nay verily, they shall gooe forthe somtyme, if nede require, and if their father commaunde or their mother: but afore she go forthe at daye, let hir prepare hir mynde and stomacke none other wyse, than if shee went to fyght. Let hir remembre, what she shall here what she shall se, and what hir selfe shall saie. Let hir considre with hir selfe that some thynge shall chaunce on euery syde, that shall moue hir chastitee and hir good

mynde,

mynde. Agaynst these dartes of the diuell fleyng on euery syde, let hir take the buckler of stomacke defended with good examples and preceptes, and a firme purpose of chastitee, and a mynde euer bent towarde Christ. And let hir knowe, that she gothe but to banitee, which lest she be taken with, she had nede to prouyde wisely. And that that she shall se forth abrode, is to be counted none other thyng, but a shewe of the lyke of the worlde: by whose vices set before hir eyes, she maie learne, not onely to kepe hir selfe out of the contagiousnes, but more ouer to amende hir owne fautes: and that what houre so euer she turneth hir selfe from god vnto men, whether she lyke theim or be lyked of theim, she forsaketh Christe, and of Christes spouse sodeynly becometh an adulterar. If she se any goodnes, let hir loue it for Christe: if she se any euyll, let hir flee it for Christe. Let hir take hede neuer to garnysche hir selfe so, nor so go, nor do, or speake so, that she be the diuelles snare to catche men in. She shuld not onely dooe none yl hir selfe, but as muche as she can, so behaue hir selfe, that shee be none occasion vnto other of doyng yll: or els shall she be a membre of the diuyll, whose instrument she is all redy, and not Christes. They saie, that the holy virgin our lady was so demure and sad, that if any man dyd cast a wanton eie vpon hir, that foule heate was all quenched as thoughe a man had caste a fyre brande in to the water.

Nowe whan she is appoynted with these thoughtes and suche other, let hir go forth with hir mother, if shee haue any, and haue leaue to go, if she haue no mother let hir go with some sadde woman, that is a wydowe, or a wyfe, or some good mayde of vertuous lyuynge,

sobze of speche, and holy shamefastenesse. Homerus wzyteth, that the chaste woman Penelope dyd comme sozth in to the company of hir wowers, but not alone, but with two honest maydes in hir company: and also hir sonne Telemachus was amonge theym sittynge. And as saint Hieronyme commandeth, whan she gothe sozth abzode, let hir not beare hir bzestes and hir necke bare, but hyde hir face, and with scarsly an eie open to se hir waie with all: Neyther let hir desire to se, noz to be sene, noz cast hir eyes vnstable hither and thether: noz be busy to knowe, who dwelleth in this place, oz in that, whiche ought scantly to knowe hir owne neighbours. He wolde haue all hyd, saue the eies to lede hir the waie. Noz I can not se, what honestee oz goodnes can be in shewynge of the necke bare: howe be it that maie be suffered, but to bare the bzest and the pappes, and betwene the shulders on the backe, and almoste the shulders, howe foule a thynge is that, as the commen saiyng is, a blynde man maie espy, whan those that see it, some abhozre the abhominablenes: and some wanton menne seyng the parte of the bodye, not vsed to be sene, are set on fyze there with. Whereto were gloues ozdeyned, but to hyde the handes, that they shulde not appere, except it were in wozke.

We rede, that the maydes of the citee of Milete were in suche a rage in olde tyme, that in dyuers places thei hanged their selfes, noz any remedye coude be founde foz that cause, there was commaunded vnder greatte peynes, that they shulde not do it, they set not by paynes, noz in dede there is no peyne sozer than death, and as foz that they went to on theyz owne myndes. Than were they watched and kepte, yet found they the meanes to

nes to die for all their keppynge: Than at laste there was a commaundement geuen, that whiche so euer killed hir selfe, shoulde be drawen naked and bare, throughe the market place of the towne in the open daie: and that peyne onely made them a ferde: for they wolde not be sene naked: no not whan they were dead.

¶ O incredible demurenes, and woorthy to bee spoken of, they that feared not death, the extremest of all sorow, yet dreade they honestie in the deade bodye: and so was that rage seased.

¶ And more ouer Nature hir selfe, the wyse mother of all thynges, prouydeth for the honestie of women. For a wonderous case, Plinye in his naturall historie writeth, that mens bodyes caste in to the sea, swymme vpryghte, and womens on the bealy. So nature hath care and respecte to womens honestie, and yet they them selfe set naught therby. Plinye.

¶ In goyng, lette the woman neyther walke ouerfaste, nor ouer slowly.

¶ Nowe whan she is in companye of people, lette hir shewe greatte sobrenes bothe in countenaunce, and all the gesture of hir body, whiche thynge let hir not dooe of any pryde, or to make hir selfe the more comely, but of sobre and veraie christen mynde: nor lette hir not beholde men muche: nor thynke that they beholde hir.

¶ Nowe if the men sytte a parte, and talke together, beholdyng hir, yet lette not hir thynke, that they talke of hir, nor loke at hir. For some maydes and younge women, that haue gotten an opinion of beautie and pretines in their selfe, wene that euerye man loketh at them onely and speake of them: and if any man loke at them, thoughe it be but by chaunce, nothyng thynkyng

vpon

vpon them, yet wene thei that thei loke at their beautie, and than they smyle: and because they will not seeme to laughe at that matter, they caste forthe some trifyll, that they thynke shoulde make folkes laughe. A man maie sometymes see. xx. syttynge together, whome if a man beholde theim, they will all laughe at ones, and saie, they laughe at some worde or dede of some of theim selfe, whiche is neuer a whyt worthe the laughyng: but that euerye one thynketh hir selfe so wonderous fayre and goodly to see and beholde, in whiche doynge they plainly shewe theyr owne foly and lyghtnes. But the mayde that will dooe after my counsaile, shall not set by hir beautie, nor iudge hir selfe fayre, nor laughe at folysshe or lewde woordes, nor shall reioyce to bee muche loked vpon, and to be a talkyng stocke for yonge men, whan she hath more cause to wepe for it, that the moste excellent goodnes, that she hath, shulde be assaulted by so many craftes and ennemies, and that hir face doeth enflame younge mens myndes vnto foule and vnlawfull lustes, whome she knoweth not, whether she can withstande or not.

¶ And for as muche as we be in hande with laughyng, whiche is a sygne of a veraie lyght and dissolute minde, let hir se that she laughe not vnmesurably. For this I nede not to bydde hir, that she shall not laughe againe vnto younge men, that laughe towarde hir, whiche none will dooe, but she that is naught, or els a foole. Let hir not suffre to bee plucked at, or to bee touched wantonly: let hir chaunge hir place, or go awaie, and nede be: let hir geue nothyng to no man, nor take ought of any man. The wyse man saieth: He that taketh a benefyte, selleth his libertee. And there is in Fraunce and

Spayne

Spayne a good saiyng: A woman that geueth a gyfte, geueth hir selfe: a woman that taketh a gyfte, selleth hir selfe. Therefore an honestee woman shall nother geue, nor take.

¶ Full of talke I woulde not haue hir, no not amonge maydes. For as for amonge men to be full of bable, I meruayle that some regarde shame so lyttell, that they do not dispraise it. That custome was confirmed, as I trowe, by the decree of the diuell, that women shoulde be praised for talkynge eloquently and promptly with men, and that by many houres together. What I praie you, shulde an ignorant mayde talke with a ponge man ignoraunte of goodnes, and counnynge enoughe in naughtynes? What shulde fyre and towe do together? What shulde they talke of so longe? What? I am sure of Christe and our lady. Nay, but rather by their communicacion they shall bee incensed and kendled, and whether they will or no, shall bee compelled to talke of their heate: and suche they call women of courte, and I trowe well, of suche courtes as be nowe a daies, that be euen the fathers of outragious vice, and the seates of Satanas: whiche not onely a christen body shall keepe theim from, but also pagannes, if they haue any witte or good mynde. But ye will paraduenture saie, They be not all naught. Fyrst, I can not tel that, and though they be chaste of body, yet bee they vnchaste of mynde: and thoughe they be good of body, yet be they common in hert. For they lacke nothyng to make them naught, but a good and conuenient occasion, because they bee euer in the eies and companye of many folkes. But wherto shulde I dispute with these folkes: What good man will alowe this? Or who will lyke it, but suche

as neuer knewe so muche as a shadowe of honestie e whiche wolde, if they coulde bringe it to passe, haue all women naught, that they myght the moze easyly fulfyll theyr vnsaciable lustes: whiche be theim selfe drowned vppe to bothe the eares in vice, vnhappynes, and vnthryftines, that they can neyther see their owne vice, noz other mens. Fyrste let theim put of that cursed darknes, where with they bee ouer layden: and than shall we beleue their iudgementes of vertue. As foz a ponge woman and a ponge man, to talke of loue in a cozner, is not mete, thoughe they were brzetherne and sisterne.

¶ There maie be rehersed many olde exaumples and newe bothe, of vices that haue be dooen amonge brzetherne and systerne, haupng occasion and tyme secrete.

2.Reg.13 So Amnon, son of kynge Dauid, defloured his owne sister Thamar. So Caunus laie by his sister Byblis.

¶ Sainct Augustyne wolde neuer dwel with his sister in house: He saied it was naught to see a woman, wozse to speake with hir, and wozste of all to touche hir.

¶ Pion an holy abbot, hadde a sister soze sicke, whiche whan he was desyzed to goe speake with hir oz she dyed, he closed vp his eies, and was led of an other body vnto hir chambze, and talked with hir, and so departed awaie.

¶ Neyther I woulde not haue brzetherne to plaie with theyr systers, noz kyns men with their nere kyns women, be they neuer so good, and chaste, and contynent: neyther to kysse them, noz groope, noz plucke at theim. What shoulde that serue foz, but to rype and pzepare theym readye foz suche as bee moze lewde: that if they desyze any vnhoneste thynge, the women sette in heate therewith, shall thynke on suche thinges as shulde touche theyr chastitee? Noz in a great courte I wolde they

shulde

shulde not crepe in to corners. What wolde they saye there, that other folkes maie not heare: if they purpose to speake of that, that is pure and chaste:

¶ Neyther I wolde there shulde be many woordes betwene ponge men and maydes, thoughe folkes be by, excepte they be so pure and honeste, that no suspecte of yll can come of theym. For some men be so crafty in noughtynes, and can wrappe in darke sentence, their myndes in suche wyse, that they maie yet be vnderstanden of hir what they meane, by that they speake vnto hir, and yet shall the double sence cause, that they maie denye that they ment so, and blame hir for wronge takynge their woordes, and vnderstandyng theim in cuyl sence, whiche they spake for no harme. And than they set muche by their owne witte, whan they be cunnyng, in these craftes, thoughe they be deuoyde of all goodnes, but able and counnyng enough to dooe yl. Whiche thynge dooeth not proue any great wyt, but an exercise in noughtynes: whiche as Senec saiethe, is worse, and more foule, than is a dull and sluggyshe wyt. For wyt is not to be rekened in subtylites and disceites, excepte we wyll reken diuylles more wyse than angelles: but one good aungel is more wyse than all ꝑ diuilles in hel.

¶ At fewe woordes, it is good to haue very lyttell or nought to dooe with men, and speake very fewe wordes with theim, and those full of sobrenes, honestie, & wisedome: nor thou shalte not therefore bee rekenened the more mope and foole, but the more wyse. And if iudgement shulde be geuen of thy disposicion, I had leauer yll folkes shulde reken the rude, than good folkes bad.

¶ Tell me, howe muche redest thou in all the historie of the gospell, that our lady euer spake. The aungell

Luc.1. comethe in vnto hir: and shee fynysshed the matter with fewe wordes, and those wise and sad, and also holy. She gothe for to se Elisabeth, and speaketh to the Luc.2. prepse of god. She bryngeth forthe a sonne, whiche is god. She is lauded of the angelles, worshypped of the heardemen, and holdeth hir peace, gatherynge and keppynge in hir remembraunce all their saiynges.

Mat.2. She was honoured of the wyse men of the easte, that came thyther a great waie: and what dooest thou rede, that euer she spake? Some other perauenture wolde haue asked of their countrey, of their treasure, of their learnyng, or of the sterre: but she, as became a ponge Luc.2. maide, spake neuer a worde. She offereth hir sonne in the temple: and whan Symeon prophisied of hym, an other wolde haue asked some mo thynges, or elles the reason and maner of those that be tolde. The olde man tourned his saiyng vnto the mayde, speakynge of hir sonne. Lo he is put for a falle and arisyng ageyne of many in Israel, and a signe, against whom there shal be speakynge, and a sworde shall cut thy herte, vnto the ende that the thoughtes of many hertes in Israel maie be opened. Some other woman wolde haue asked, whan, how, and where it shulde haue ben: but we rede not, that she saied any thynge.

Ibidem. She lost hir derest sonne at Hierusalem: and whan she had sought hym three dayes, and at the last founde hym, howe many woordes saied she to hym? Sonne why haste thou serued vs soo? Lo thy father And I sought the carefully. After that whan she was of more Joan.1. age, at a marryage she saied no more but this: Sonne they haue no wyne. And at the crosse she was cleane dumme: she asked neuer a whytte of hir sonne, neyther

with

with whome he wolde haue hir, nor what he wolde commaunde hir to do, whan he dyed. For she had not learned to prattle among folkes. All maydes, and all women folowe you hir: for she was but of fewe wordes, but wonderous wyse.

¶ Theano Metapontina a poet, and a maide excellent cunnynge, reckened that Silence was the noblest ornament of a woman. And Sophocles is of the same opinion: for with sylence bothe wisedome and chastitee, be swetely poudered. Silence.

¶ Thou arte none attourney of lawe good doughter, nor pleadeste not in courte, that thou shalte neede to quaile eyther thyne owne, or thy clyentes matter, except thou speake. Holde thou thy peace as boldly as other speake in court: and so shalt thou better defende the matter of thy chastitee, whiche afore iuste iudges shall be stronger with silence than with speche.

¶ We rede in histories, that a child was ones brought in to the common place at the citee of Rome, vpon a matter of chastitee, and with holdyng downe his eies, on the grounde, and stylle silence, defended his matter better than he shulde haue done with longe oracions of oratours. But nowe to speake of women.

¶ Saynte Susan excused hir selfe of the cryme of adultery with sylence, and not with woordes. Nowe let vs here saynt Ambrose. Dan. 13.

¶ The holy woman Susan helde hir peace, and ouercame hir ennemyes: for she defended not hir selfe with reasonyng of wordes, nor with speche of any atturney, but the holy woman hir selfe holdyng hir tounge, hir chastitee spake for hir.

¶ Also in the boke of virgins he saieth on this wyse:

1.Cor.14. I had leauer a maide shulde loue to lytle talke than to muche: For if women be commaunded to holde their peace of holy matters in the churche, and aske their husbandes at home, what shulde maydes do (suppose you) that whyle, in whome shamefastnes garnysheth theyr age, and stylnes cõmendeth theyr shamefastnes? For she shall not onely amonge men behaue hir selfe so, but also amonge women: moderate and litel speeche shall becomme hir, and not shryll, nor presumptuous, or sygne of a mans stomacke, nor iuigned with othes: whiche thynge whan it is vncomely in men, muste needes be in women abhominable, nor vse hir voice to bee feate and nyce, nor sette hir countenaunce to crueltee and frownyng, nor ouer sadde and sorowfull, or dysdaynishly, nor diuersely, nor full of pleasaunce, or ouer cherefulle, or vnstable, or wandryng, or dissolute, shewynge tokens of a mynde there vnto accordyng. Some bee so subtle mynded, that amonge their companyons they bable out all at large, bothe their owne matters and other folkes, nor haue no regarde what they saie, but what soo euer cometh on theyr tounges ende: and therof cometh a fantasye to lye, whan they lacke trouth: and hereof ryseth the fable by theim, that of one rauin made an hundred, and of one man slayne, a thonsande, and of a meane dogge, one more than an Elyphant of Ynde: in so muche that nowe no man can fynde wordes to reprehend that inordynate and shamfull thynge with all accordyngly. Euery body taketh the matter with mythe and sporte, who so can tell a thynge the moste shamefull: Some bable because they thynke their selfe they can no good, without they talke, or elles that they be not halfe frendly, without they

prattle

prattle out all secretes they can vnto other, though it be eyght ieoperdous. Wherfore many wyse men take occasyon of that, to geue preceptes, that men shulde neuer commytte theyr counsaile vnto women, neyther to his syster, his mother, nor his wyfe: but this is but a vice of some, and not of the hole kynde, as hath appered by example of dyuerse, as that womanne of Pythagoras schole and secte, that byt of hir owne tonge, and spytte out in the face of the tyranne that dydde tourmente hir, leaste she shulde be compelled of necessitee, to telle that she woulde not.

¶ I let passe here the women of Mylete, whiche kepte theyr husbandes counsaile at Massile many a daie, so longe as was necessary.

¶ Tacitus writeth, that Epicaris, because she was of counsayle of the treason that Piso wente about, was commaunded to bee haled with tourmentes, to cause hir for to shewe. The fyrste daie she was attasted with beatynge and fyre, and that the more greuously, because the tourmentours were angrye, that a woman shoulde sette theim at so lyghte: yet for all that she was not ones moued, nor wolde not confesse that she knewe any thynge. The nexte daie she was broughte vnto the same peynes agayne, and was caried vppe in a chayre, because hir bones were so haled in sunder, that she coude not stande, and there she toke a towell, that was tyed aboute hir breaste, and fastened it to the top of the chayre in maner of a snare, and put in hir necke, and there hanged by it with all the weyght of hir body, and wronge out that lyttell lyfe that she had. Epicaris.

¶ We reade in the histories of the Athenienses, that the concubine of Aristogiton, whiche banysshed Pi-

sistrates

Leena. sistrotes chyldren, called Leena by name, whan she was haled vpon tourmentes, to shewe where hir louer was, she suffred all thynge styll and paciently.

¶ If that harlottes and naughtie women dyde thus, what shulde we suppose good women wolde dooe? Let not the mayde bee ouer busy in a nother bodyes house, neyther riffle vp and serche euery corner: nor desyre to haue or knowe more than folkes will shewe of their own good wyll.

¶ Nor let hir not skolde and chide foorthe abrode, neither for smalle mattiers, nor thoughe it were for great possessions: it is better to abyde the losse of hir goodes, than of hir good name, and honestie, and hir shamefastenes, whiche thynges she ought to haue in mooste pryse. As for feastes, great dyners, and bankettes, I wotte not what preceptes to geue chrysten folkes concernyng theim, in the custome that nowe is worse than amonge paganes: in so muche that he shall be reken ed madde, that wyll not suffre hym selfe to bee taken and drawen with the vse of the worlde, but wyll withstande suche multitude of people hym selfe alone, or els with veraie fewe mo. Therfore lette the woman geue an eare vnto the pagane Ouide, because she wyll not regarde a chrysten mans woordes: For he in geuyng those vnthriftie rules of louyng, speaketh of these commen resortynges vnto plaies and feastes in this maner.

They came to see, and eke for to be sene,
Full muche chastitee quayled there hath bene.

¶ Iuuenal the poete, in his boke called Satyrs saieth: That no wyues, that lyste contente and please sad and honest men, wyll be founde and sene at commen plaies, daunsynges or other great resorte of people. Ouide saieth,

saieth, that feastes and bankettes bee the instrumentes and armour of Uenus and Cupide. And to saie good sothe, what garde of chastitee can there bee, where the mayde is desired with so manye eyes, where so many faces loke vpon hir, and agayne she vpon so many? She muste nedes fyze some, and hir selfe also be fyzed agayne, and she be not a stone. Moreouer there is layde great nourysshement vnto that heate, by the reason of meate and dzynke of the feaste, and talkynge, touchynge, groppyng, and pluckyng, and many other wanton poyntes, whervnto that vnbzydled Bacchus geueth libertee and boldnes. What mynde can be pure and holle amonge all this geare, and not spotted with any thought of luste?

¶ The foolyshe people weneth a ponge woman dooeth no synne, excepte she lye with a man in deede. Than thou that arte chzistened, by the gospie of Chziste, how dooest thou heare oz reade the wozdes of Chziste in the gospell, where he saieth: Thou shalte geue a counte in the daie of iudgement foz euery idell woozde that thou speakeste? Nowe than amonge younge men and ponge women, in resoztynges and dzynkynges, howe many wozdes flye to and fro, not onely idell, but also ieoperdous. And also where he saieth: who so loketh vpon an other mannes wyfe, and desyzeth to haue hir, he hathe committed adultery all ready with hir in his hert: suppose you not, that this was mente as well by the woman, beholdynge a man? And to be bzieke, thou arte not chzistened, noz spirituall, but a pagane and carnall, if thou dooest not beleue, that thou haste a syzynge of vngraciousnes within the: And that it fozeth not, what the mynde be, but the body. Matt. 5. Matt. 12.

I dare be bolde to saie, that fewe yonge women, after they begynne to waxe towarde womannes state, come frome feastes, and bankettes, and resorte of men with safe myndes. But some be taken with eloquence, some with deliuernesse of bodye, some with one propretee, and some with other: whiche a yonge woman shall find in great multitude of men, set lyke nettes. And it is an harde thynge to scape vncaught with those thynges, where vnto she is some thynge inclyned all ready. How muche were it better, not to loue this ieoperdy, than to perysshe in it, as the wyse man saieth?

Eeiij.

¶ Verely my mynde is, and I trowe Christes to, that maydes shoulde be kepte at home, and not goe abrode, excepte it be to heare masse, and that well couered, leaste they eyther geue or take occasyon of snarynge. A christen mayde oughte to haue nothynge a doo with weddyng, feastes, bankettes, and resortynges of men.

¶ Fynally, what myne opinion is, concernynge women, you maie knowe by that, that I woulde not haue younge boyes brought vnto feastes, bothe because it hurteth the strengthe and the helthe of the childe, in his tyme of growyng: and because that feastes be the springes of greatte and manye vices, bee they neuer so sobre and moderate. A chylde shall see there many vncomely thynges, and learne muche naughtines, euen amonge aged men, thoughe they be right wise. Where to shulde I saie amonge women and menne, where after theyr myndes be inflamed bothe inwarde and outwardly vnto foule luste, bee they neuer so well kepte vnder, yet wyll they shewe theym selfe foule and outragyously, nor will be bridled in, nor obey theyr gouernour? What than wyll they doo, if they bee prouoked forwardes?

Than

Than in dede there will bee neyther rule noꝛ measure, noꝛ any respecte of honestie.

Of daunsynge. Cap. xiii.

NOVVE let vs speake of that thynge, whiche some maydes do, nothynge moꝛe gladly, and be taught also with great diligence, of bothe father and mother, that is to daunce cunnyngly. I wyl make no mencion, here of the olde vse of wꝛastlyng, whiche bothe Plato and many of the stoyke phylosophers said, was holsome foꝛ honeste mens sonnes: and Cicero and Quintilian called necessary foꝛ an oꝛatour. Whiche was nothynge but a certayne infourmynge of gesture, and mouynge of the body, to set and moue all in comly oꝛdꝛe: whiche crafte nowe, as manye other be, is cleane out of vse. I will intreate of this daunsynge, that nowe a dayes is muche vsed, whiche many of the Grekes pꝛeysed, as they dyd many mo thynges, some folysshe, and some also filthy: whiche the sage people of Rome refused: noꝛ we rede not that euer any of those sad matrones vsed daunsyng. Saluste wꝛyteth, that one Sempꝛonia, dyd bothe synge and daunce moꝛe cunnyngly, than was necessary foꝛ a good woman. Also Cicero, defendyng Murena agaynst Cato, which had layde vnto his charge, that he had vsed daunsyng in Asia, where he was gouernour foꝛ a season, whiche dede was so dissalowable, that he durste not defende it foꝛ well done, but stykkely denyed, saiyng moꝛe ouer, that neuer sobꝛe man daunsed, excepte he were mad, neyther beynge alone, neyther at an honest and measurable banket. Feastynges out of tyme, and pleasant spoꝛtes, and delycate pastyme, bꝛynge euer daunsyng

in the laste ende: So that daunsyng must nedes be the extreme of all vices.

¶But we nowe in chzistiane countreis haue schooles of daunsynge, howe be it that is no wondze, seyng also we haue houses of baudzy, so muche the pagans were better and mozе sad than we be: noz they neuer knewe this newe fasshyon of daunsynge of ours, so vnreasonable, and fulle of shakynge and bzaggynge, and vncienly handlynges, groppynges, and kyssynges: and a very kendlynge of lechery. Wherto serueth all that bassyng, as it were pydgyns the byzdes of Uenus? In olde tyme kyssynge was not vsed, but amonge kynsefolke: nowe is it a common thynge in Englande and Fraunce, If they do it because of Babtisme, that they maie seme all as bzetherne and systerne, I pzeyse the entent: if other wyse, I se not where vnto it perteyneth to vse so muche kissyng, as thoughe that loue and charitee coude none other waie stand betwene men and women. Without this were their purpose, to stere vp their bodily lustes in suche colde countreis. Uerily me thinketh it is a foule and rude maner. But nowe to speake of daunsyng.

¶What good dothe all that daunsynge of yonge women, holden vpon mens armes, that they maie hop the hygher? What meaneth that shakynge vnto mydnyght, and neuer wery, whiche if they were desyzed to go but to the nexte churche, they were not able, excepte they were caryed on hozse backe: oz in a charette? Who wolde not thynke theim out of their wittes?

¶I remembze, that I harde vpon a tyme saie, that there were certayne men bzought out of a farre countrey in to our partes of the wozlde, whiche whan they

sawe

ſawe women daunce, they rounne awaie wonderſly a-fraide, cryeng out, that they thought the women were taken with an vnked kynde of franſy. And to ſaie good ſothe, who wolde not reken women frantycke, whan they daunce, if he had neuer ſene women daunce before? And it is a woꝛlde to ſe, howe demurely and ſadly ſome ſyt beholdyng theim that daunce, & with what geſture, paſe, and mouynge of the body, and with what ſobꝛe fotyng ſome of theim daunce. Wherin alſo a man maie ſpye a great part of their foly: that go about to handle ſuche a foolyſhe thynge ſo ſadly: neyther ſe theim ſelfe haue a matter in hande without any wyſedome, neyther any thynge woꝛthe, but as Cicero ſaieth, a companyon of vices. What holy woman dyd we euer rede of, that was a daunſer: Oꝛ what woman nowe adayes, that is ſad and wyſe, wyl be knowen to ſkyll of daunſyng, and wyl not refuſe it, if ſhe be deſyꝛed to daunce? Foꝛ they knowe wel enoughe, it is a folyſhe thynge, oꝛ els they wolde dooe it of their owne courage. But they wyll not be gladde to come where daunſynge is. Foꝛ what chaſtitee of body and mynde can be there, where they ſhall ſee ſo many mens bodyes, and haue their myndes entiſed by the wyndowes of their eyes, and by the meanes of the moſte ſubtill artificer the dyuill.

There is alſo a certayne ſaiyng of an holy man: That he had leauer plowe and dygge vpon the holy daie, than daunce.

¶ Sainct Ambꝛoſe wꝛiteth vnto his ſyſter, ſaiyng in this wiſe: Myꝛth ought to be in a clere conſcience, and a good mynde, and not in ſpyſed bankettes, and weddyng feaſtes full of mynſtrelſye. Foꝛ there chamefaſtnes is ill defended, and vnlefull abuſion ſuſpected:

where the laste ende of pleasure is daunsynge: frome whiche I desire all virgins of god to kepe theim selfe. For no man (as a certaine wyse manne of the pagans saieth) daunseth, if he be sobre, excepte he be mad.

Nowe than, if that either dronkennes or madnes be rekened to be the cause of daunsyng among the pagans, what than shulde we counte to bee commaunded in the holy scripture: where we rede that Saynete Johan the Babtiste, the messanger of Christe, was put to death at the pleasure of a daunsyng wenche: By the whiche thynge we maie take example, that this vnlawfull pastyme of daunsynge hathe been cause of more hurte, than the fransy of robbers and murtherers. Matt. 14.

This deadly feaste was prepared with a kyngly largesse and excesse, and watche layde whan company was at the moste, and than the doughter, whiche was hydde vp afore in secrete, brought forthe to daunce before the people. What coulde the doughter lerne more of hir mother, whiche was an harlot, but to lease hir honestie? For nothynge inclyneth folke more to bodily luste, than by vncomely mouynge and gesture, to shewe the operacion of these parties, whiche either Nature hathe hydde secretly, or good maner and nourture hathe couered: or to plaie castes with hir eies, or shake the necke, or swynge hir heare. Wherefore they muste nedes fall in to offence agaynst the maiestee of god. For what honestie can be kepte there, where daunsynge is? So than the kynge delyted with that pastime, bad her aske what so euer she wolde. This is saynct Ambrose saiyng.

Of

¶Of louyng. Cap. xiiii.

LOVE is breade by reason of company and communicacion with men: for amonge pleasures, feastes, laughyng, daunsing, and voluptees, is the kyngedome of Venus and Cupide. And with these thynges folkes mindes be entised and snared, and specially the womennes, on whome pleasure hath sorest dominion.

¶O miserable yonge woman, carefull mayst thou be, if thou departe out of that company entangled all redy, howe muche better had it bene for the, to haue bydden at home, and rather to haue broken a legge of thy bodye, than a legge of thy mynde? Howe be it I will go aboute to fynde a remedye, to saue the from takynge, if thou be vntaken: and if thou bee taken, that thou mayest skape out againe.

¶I will let passe here, that hath bee saied by philosophers, and all holy and wyse men agaynste Cuppydes loue: nor I will not reherse the wrytynge of those, whiche seeme to haue praised loue purposely. But they, whome I spake of here afore, what araylynge dooe they make of loue, callynge hym tyranne, myscheuous, cruel, harde, vnkind, foule, vngracious, cursed, wicked, and causer of mooste vnhappynes. Saincte Hieronyme saieth of loue in this maner, After the opinion of Aristotle and Plutarche.

¶Loue of the beautie is a forgettyng of reason, and the nexte thynge vnto fransy, a foule vice, and an vnmanerly for an hole mynde, it troubleth all the wittes, it breaketh and abateth hyghe and noble stomackes, and draweth theim downe frome the studye and thynkynge of highe and excellente thynges, vnto lowe and vile, Loue.

vile, and causeth them to be full of gronyng, and complainyng, to be angrye, hastie koolehardy, streicte in rulynge, fulle of vile and seruile flaterynge, vnmete for euerye thynge, and at the laste vnmete for the loue it selfe. For whan they bourne so without measure in desyre to opteyne theyr purpose, they lose the mooste parte of theyr tyme, in suspiciousnes, mournyng weppynge, waylyng, syghynge, and complainyng: wherewith they make them selfe hated, and in conclusion hate their owne selfe. Thus saieth saincte Hieronime.

¶ Who can nowe expresse with woordes, howe muche periury, what disceites, what murther, what slaughter, what distruction of citees, of countreyes, and nacions, this loue hath caused? What nedeth me to reherse here the distruction of Troye made for Helayne? or to telle what greate multitude of people was there slayne? or of the great warre betwene the Lacedemonians and Mecenians, for the maidens taken awaie? or the holle empire of the Lacedemonians brought in decaye by Epaminundas the capitayne of Thebes, at Leuctras in Boece, whiche toke vengeance vpon theim (as Plutarche maketh mencion) for the doughters of Scedasus rauished by the yonge men of Lacedemon? and because the rulers of the citee regarded not his complaint.

¶ Kynge Rodericke of Spayne loste his countreye, whan it was moste flowrishynge, for dekynge Cana, the daughter of Julian therle, and lefte it to bee ouerrenne and spoyled of the Agarens. Adam also for the loue of Eue, loste and caste awaie mankynde. Virgil crieth out saiynge: What mischefe dooeth not golde cause? Nay but what mischiefe dooeth not loue cause? It compelled Dauid the mooste gentyll kynge to caste

innocent

innocent Vry in to manyfeast ieoperdy, that he mought haue Barsabe at his libertee. Salomon the moste wise kynge was so doted with loue, that he fell to idolatry. Sampson loste his strength therby. Medea was compelled to all to cutte hir brother, and slea hir owne children: and Catiline to slee his owne sonne for the loue of Oristill, that he myght rydde his house for hir. Many younge women haue hated bothe father and mother, and all their kynne because they haue letted theym of their loue. Many haue poysoned theyr owne mothers, that they myght renne awaie with their louers. 2.Reg.11. 3.Reg.11. Judic.16.

¶ This inordinate and cruell affection if one myght see it with the bodilye eyes, he woulde bee as ferde as thoughe a wylde beaste were broughte sodeynly vppon hym, and wolde renne awaie for drede as farre as euer he myght. Wherfore if thou be not enfected all readye with the venome of this serpent, call ofte vnto remembrance this littell verse.

Loue maie be taken vp at ones pleasure,
But not layde awaie.

¶ Therefore it is in thy power to loue or leaue before thou fall in to it. But after thou art ones in, than arte thou not in thyne owne power, but vnder it, neyther thou canste not rydde the thereof whan thou wouldest. Who woulde be gladde to receiue home suche a guest: who wyll not keepe hym awaie frome his house? For loue fyrste of all troubleth and tossethe all thynge vppe sette downe at his luste, that hym selfe maie beare the more outragious rule, and confoundeth and blindeth the wit and reason, that it shall not se and knowe what is dooen within, but suffre it selfe to be holly leade and drawen at loues pleasure.

¶This cruell venome, that so robbeth vs of our syght, draweth vs ouer a thousande rockes and hilles, and many tymes throweth vs in to suche a doungion, frome whens we can neuer scape out. There is no dede so vngracious, so cruell, so outragious, or so straunge, that we wyll not dooe to obey loue. Diseiue frendes, kylle kyns folke, slee father and mother, murther chyldrene, whome hir selfe hath borne, all these bee but trifyls for loues pleasure: neither it is reken ed any great greuous acte to destroye vtterly theyr countreye, to perysshe an holle realme, or ryd vp all mankynde. What remembraunce can here bee of holynes, of vertue, iustice, of god, of deuocion, or good mynde, all is but tapes, yea and finally thine owne helthe forgotten. Wherfore, who so is safe enoughe, and consydereth these thynges, and doeth not his dilygence, neuer to come into this rage and franesye, is woorthy to be kepte therin, nor neuer to fynde ende or measure of that iuell, but to bee vexed bothe daie and nyghte with the fyre brande of Cupide: neyther to take meate, nor slepe, nor se, nor reste, neither to haue any vse belongyng vnto mankynde.

¶This affection of loue taketh wonders sore the myndes of all folkes, and specially of women. Wherfore they had nede to take the more heede, leaste it steale in vpon theim. For it cometh commonly at vnware vpon suche as will take no laboure to auoyde it, whan they bee in the daunger and occasions thereof, nor care what mynde come, but receiue it whan it cometh, as a swete and pleasaunt thynge: not knowynge what and howe perillous a poyson, lyeth hyd vnder that pleasant face. Therfore they shulde specially withstand the fyrste occasions: whiche thynge Ouide the maister of

loue

loue counsayleth, and as the Prophet in the psalme dothe teache: Suffre not those chyldren of Babylon to growe vp, but knock theim vpon a stone, and breake them on the hard fyrmament of religion, that is Chriſte, whiche in the cantikels geueth warnyng vnto virgins, saiyng: Take ye the ponge foxes, whiche marre your vines. And commaundeth to take theim the moze diligently, if the vynes shewe all redye flowers of good frute. Nowe loue by longe space wareth moze, and gathereth strength, as many other thynges dooe: For Ouid saieth: Cant. 2.

I haue sene a wounde, that in the begynnyng.
Mought easily haue be brought to healyng,
Whiche by delay and continuaunce
Hathe after growen vnto moze greuance.

¶Gyue none eare vnto the louer, no moze than thou woldest dooe vnto an inchauntoure or a sorcerer. For he cometh pleasauntly and flatteryng, fyrste prepsynge the maide, shewynge hir, howe he is taken with the loue of hir beautie, and that he muste be deade for hir loue: for these louers knowe well enough, the vayne glorious myndes of many, whiche haue a great delyte in their owne prepses, wherwith they bee caught, lyke as the byrder begyleth the byrdes.

¶He catlethe the fayre, propre, wittie, welspoken, and of gentyll bloude, wherof parauenture thou arte nothynge at all: and thou lyke a foole arte glad to here those lyes, and weneſt that thou dooeſt seme so in dede, whan thou arte neuer a whytte so.

¶But put case thou dooeſt seme so. Loke whether he calle the wyse and honeſt, whiche if he dooe not, all thy prepse is nought: and if he do, what mate he hope to get

of the? For if he hope to obteyne of his purpose therby, than hathe he belyed the. Howe hath he than handled this matter?

¶ He saieth he is taken with thy prayeties. What thā? and saieth he shall dye, excepte he maie haue the, yea there is the cause of his complaynt. Therfore beware thou, least thy selfe be taken also with his wordes, and perysshe as well as he. He saieth he shall dye for the, yea and that he dyed euen streyght waie. Beleueste thou that? A foole, let hym shewe the, how many haue died for loue, amonge so many thousandes as haue bene louers. Loue dothe peyne some tymes, but it neuer sleeth. Or though he dyd dye for the, yet it were better for the let hym perysh, than be perysshed thy selfe: and that one shulde perishe than twayne.

¶ I nede not to reherse here, the cōmon songe of louers whiche thei syng only to disceiue, whan they haue many tymes not one droppe of loue towarde hir. For if he had ones fulfylled his appetyte of the, than wolde he shewe how muche he loued the. If he had loued thy good vertues and mind, as lōg as thou haddest liued, he wold neuer haue ben full or wery of the. But now because he loued but only thy body, & the short pleasure therof, therfore whan the body decayeth, his loue also vanisheth awaie, and he fylled and saciate with pleasure, lotheth the plentie.

¶ There be not a fewe examples therof: neither we nede not to fetche theim of the olde worlde. For there is none so ignorant, but he hath harde tel and sene thousandes of men, whiche whan they had abused ponge women for a season, haue caste theim vppe in to some stewes, because they neuer loued theim in dede. And

many

many that haue loued very feruently, haue ben turned at the last from hotte loue vnto mortall hate, and haue kylde their loues, or cutte their throttes. There is no citee, wherin those thynges be not harde daily. Wherfore I wonder muche of the foly of yong women: which willyngly drowned theim selfe in the great sea of wretchednes. Where of come so many stewes, and so many harlottes, yea that haue been commen of honeste kyn.

¶ What is the cause, that so many yonge women lye pockye, and scabbed, in spittels, and lazer houses, and that yonge women? What is the cause that so many go a beggyng, pale and sycke but these meanes? Wherfore if no regarde of vertue, no regarde of goodnes and honestie maie moue ỹ, if none actes of holy virgins may reuoke the, at leaste wyse let these miserable chaunces of yonge women tourne the, whiche doutles shall lyght vpon the, if thou folowe on the same waie that they haue gone before. For the louer wyll disceiue the, either because it is his custome to disceiue, or because that is the rewarde of this filthy loue, or elles because the pleasure lothed by the reason of abundaunce, moueth hym so to doo.

¶ Here vnto many thynges shall profyte, that haue bene tolde in the place, where I haue intreated of the keppynge and saupynge of chastitee: as that good fare of meate and drynke, do not kendle and norysshe loue, neither also ydelnes, nor ouer muche keppynge of company with men.

¶ Lucian the Rhetorician enduceth Venus askyng hir son Cupide, what is the cause that whan he woundeth with his darte of loue, bothe Iuppiter, Neptune, Appollo, Juno, yea and hir selfe to his owne mother, and

tynally all the goddes, yet doeth he not ones meddell with Pallas, Diane, and the Muses: wherunto he answereth: Pallas saieth he, threatneth me, whan I come towarde hir, and resisteth and withstandeth the occasions. Nowe the Muses be full of vertuous reuerence, and euer occupied with some vertuous labour: and so they keepe theim out of loue with their study. And Diane renneth about in the woddes and desartes, and so she can not loue, because she fleeth company.

For muche of loue crepeth in by the bodily senses: which after nourished with in tendre mindes and thoughtes, groweth vnto more. But parauenture the maide is caught all redy: than must we seeke a remedy for the woūnde, afore it constrayne hir to do that thyng, which shall cause hir euerlastyng repentaunce.

¶ First thou maiest be sory, that thou haste wittyngly throwen thy selfe in to that doungion. For those folkes ought to be taken hede vnto, that saye, it lyeth not in their owne power, to eschewe loue. For so saye some, whiche excuse their owne vyce with necessitee: as though they had done it agaynst their wyll. For they that so saie, seme to knowe the power and nature of loue. Also remembre this littell verse: Loue can not be thrust out, but it maie crepe out. Wherby, we maie perceyue, that loue neyther breaketh in violently, nor can be caste out violently. But lyke wyse as it hath by lytel and littel crept in, so by littel and littel it maie be put awaie agayne. Therfore let not thy mynde wandre. For if it be not kept, it will run thither of it owne accorde.

¶ Some tyme consider thy selfe, howe many thynges thou haste done foolishly, blyndly, and without wyt, brayne, or reason, by the meanes of loue: And howe

muche

muche good tyme thou haste loste in it, with vnprofitable and foolyshe cares, and loste the occasions of many good dedes.

¶ Remembre also, howe thou haste bourned, howe many thynges thou haste thoughte, saied, yea and dooen, parte foolyshe, parte madde, yea and some vngracious. Remembre into what miserie thou casteste thy selfe like a blynde body: and what a benefyte againe thou haste obteyned, that haste recouered thy sight, and a purpose and wyll to come vnto better mynde agayne: whiche thynge thou maiest reken to bee a great gyfte of god, and thy selfe to be muche bounde to hym for it. Therfore sette thy selfe vnto some woorke, and kepe thy selfe from the syght and hearynge of the person, that thou louedst: and if he come by chaunce into thy thought, turne thy mynd some other waie, either with readyng or prayeng, or some good communication, or some honest songe, or studiyng of some mery matter: so that it bee cleane and honest. And if he, whome thou loueste, haue any faulte or vice, call that ofte vnto remembraunce, and not what vertue and goodnes he hath: For there is no body lyuynge, but he hath some thyng, that maie be dispraised: therfore lette that be had fyrste in remembraunce, and consydre this, that great vices lye often hyd vnder the colour of vertue, and manye perillous thynges cloked vnder an honest face outwarde.

¶ Beautie maketh folkes proude and disdaynous: noble byrthe maketh them stately: ryches, intollerable: strength of body cruell. Therfore consydre in thy mind, not what he hath saied, that hath lyked the, but what he hath spoken, that hath dislyked the: as if he hath either dooen or saied ought peuyshely, folishely, foule, horrible,

horrible, abhominable, lewedly, vnthriftyly, madly, vngraciously: and by that that cometh forthe, make coniecture, what lyeth hyd secretly and closely within. For there is no body, but he hydeth his faulte as muche as he can, and sheweth his vertue vnto the vttermost, and so the vertue appereth more than it is, and the vice lesse. ¶ Moreouer, we bee disceyued with the nere similitudes of vices and vertues, whan euery man laboreth to seeme better than he is, and we vnwysely, and after the common opinion esteeme vertues, callyng hym liberall that is a waster: and hym bolde, that is foolehardy: and eloquent, that is a great babler: and wyttee, that is inconstant, wherewith yonge women bee ofte disceiued, whan they can not perceyue the sothe, and iudge the man by that, whiche outwardly appereth. Neither any man gothe to his loue, but he setteth hym selfe forthe with all his beste prporcees, that he maie seeme to lacke nothyng, that any man oughte to haue: and by that meanes disceiueth foolysshe younge women, hydynge great vices, vnder a thyn colour of vertue, as byrders hyde the lyme with meate, and fysshers the hoke with the bayte.

¶ This a younge woman oughte to consyder, before it be to late to repente, leaste shee begynne to ware wyse, whan it shall nothynge auayle. And if thou bee cleane gotten out of loue, and healed, and haste recouered thy syght againe, than shalte thou se, howe muche thou arte bounde vnto god, that hath taken the out of thy madnes, and restored the vnto thy wytte. For what vertuous christen woman, or elles pagane, of any wytte or honestie, loued euer any other than hir husband. Therfore thou shalte neither desyre thy selfe to bee loued in

this

this wyse, neyther by vngracious craftes inflame the myndes of men, the whiche fyre shall retourne againe vnto thy selfe. Many women reioyce to haue louers, whose hertes they maie bourne and inflame purposely. O thou vngracious woman, seest thou not, howe thou bringest hym into the possession of the diuell with thy crafte, whyther thy selfe shall go also, there to receiue thy mede, where ye shall bothe bourne, he for beynge ouercome of the diuell, and thou for ouercommyng hym for the diuell, ye shall both be paied your wages? Now the apostle saieth: The wages of synne, is death. Rom. 6.

¶ Howe a mayden ought to loue. Cap. xv.

And yet I woulde not a mayde shoulde clerely be without loue, for mankynde seemeth to bee made and shapen vnto loue, to the entent thei maie be coupled togither in charitee, and not with this carnall and fylthy erthely Cupide and Uenus, but the heauenly and spirituall, whiche causeth holy loue. Wherefore the mayde shall haue to loue the father almyghtie god, hir spouse Christe, and his mother the holy virgine, and the churche of god, with all the holy virgins, whose soules dwell blessedly in heauen: and their names be had in honour here in earth.

¶ She hath also hir owne father and mother, whiche broughte hir into the worlde, and brought hir vp, and nourysshed with so great laboure and care: whome she oughte to haue in the stede of god, and loue and worshyp, and helpe with all hir power. Therefore lette hir regarde greatly their commaundementes and mekely obey theim, neyther shewe in myndе countinaunce nor

ieſture any ſtubbernes, but reken theim to be as it were a verie image of almightie god, the father of al thinges.

¶ She hath alſo to loue, hir owne vertues and ſoule, and mynde geuen vnto god: and moze ouer the eternall pleaſure and welthe, whiche neuer ſhall haue ende. Whiche thinges if ſhe loue truely, ſhe ſhall neyther loue man aboue god, neyther ſette moze by a baudie felowe, than hir ſpouſe Chriſte: noz regarde moze an olde fylthy baude, than the pure virgin Mary: neyther loue better the ſtynkynge ſtues, than the holy churche of god: noz the companye of vncleane women, aboue the company of holy virgins: noz ſtrangers aboue father and mother: noz hir body aboue hir ſoule: neyther ſette moze by other folkes vices, than theyz vertues: noz myndes that ſerue the diuell, aboue thoſe that ſerue god: neyther theim that woulde haue hir deſtroyed, aboue theim that woulde haue hir ſaued: noz a ſhozte pleaſure, aboue ioye euerlaſtynge: noz the myſerye of dampned folkes, aboue the perfyte wealthe of theim that be ſaued.

¶ By theſe meanes the commaundementes of God ſhall be moze eſteemed with hir, than the counſailes of a diſceptefull manne: and rather geue credence vnto Chriſte, than vnto the woozdes of a lecherous knaue: and rather folowe the virgin Mary, than bodily pleaſure: and haue hym moze deare, whome ſhe hath conciled vnto the, than whome a baudye drabbe counſaileth the vnto. Neyther breake the lawes of the churche, to kepe the lawes of the brothell houſe: and rather chooſe the company of ſainct Catherine, ſainct Agnes, ſainct Clare, ſaincte Tecla, and ſainct Agatha, than the company of them, of whom bothe the lyke is vnknowen vnto god,

to god, and the names vnto man, and both well enough knowen vnto the diuell.

¶ Neither forsake thy father and mother, to folowe thy louer: nor geue theim perpetuall sorowe, to geue thy louer the shorte pleasure of thy selfe. Neyther wysshe rather to fare wel in thy body, than in thy soule: neither thy body to be in ioye, and thy soule in woo: neyther geue an eare rather vnto an vnthryftie tale, than a vertuous: nor beleue the minister of the diuel, rather than the minister of Chriſte. For the pleasure is but shorte, and the peyne euerlastyng.

¶ How the maide shal seeke an husband. Cap. xvi.

The wyse poet Virgille, where he dothe brynge in kynge Latinus, and his wyfe Amata, talkynge to gether with Turnus, whiche shulde be their doughters husbande, their doughter also present, he maketh the maide to do no more but wepe and blusshe, without speakyng of wordes: wherby he sygnifieth, that it becometh not a maide to talke, where hir father and mother be in communication about hir mariage: but to leaue all that care and charge holly vnto theim: whiche loue hir as well as hir selfe dothe. And lette hir thynke that hir father and mother wyll prouyde no lesse diligently for hir, than she wolde for hir selfe: but muche better, by the reason they haue more experyence and wysedome. Moreouer it is not comely for a mayde to desire mariage, and muche lesse to shewe hir selfe to longe therfore.

¶ It was accustome in olde tyme amonge the Romayns, whyle that chast worlde lasted, whiche was the example of honestie, that whan a mayde was fyrste

maried, and brought in to hir husbandes house, she shulde not go in at his doze hir selfe, but be taken vp and be caryed in by other: as a token, that she came not thether with hir good wyll, where she shulde lose hir virginitee.

¶ Therfoze whan the father and the mother be busy about their doughters mariage, let hir helpe the matter forwarde with good prayer: and desyre of Christe and his mother with pure affection, that she maie haue suche an husbande, whiche shall not let noz hynder hir from vertuous lyuynge, but rather prouoke, exhorte and helpe hir vnto it.

¶ And the fathers on their parties, lette theim calle to remembrance, the saiyng of Themistocles, the noble man of Grece, whiche whan he was asked of one, whether he hadde leauer mary his daughter to a ryche yll man, oz to a pooze good man, made answere againe: I had leauer haue a man without money, than money without a man.

¶ Also let hym remembre the doynge of Pittachus, the wyse man of Mytilena, whiche whan a ponge man that had choyse of.ii. wyues, the one of great substance and kynne, the other egal vnto his selfe of ryches and byrthe, asked hym counsayle, whether were better to mary: the wyseman bad hym go to childzen plaiynge. Nowz had the chyldzen a plate, wherin they were wont to synge and repete often these woozdes: Take to the thy pere: wherby they ment, that moste wysedome was foz euery man to dooe so.

¶ It is a great charge foz a man to seke an husbande foz his doughter, neither it ought not to be gone about neglygently. It is a knot that can not be lyghtly loosed, only

sed, onely death vndoeth it. Wherefore the fathers and mothers, procure vnto their doughters, eyther perpetuall felicitee, if they mary theim to good men, or perpetuall misery, marying them vnto yll. Here is muche to be studied, and great delyberacion to be taken, with good aduisement and counsaile afore a man determine ought. For there is muche werynes in maryage, and many peynes muste be suffred. There is nothyng but one, that shal cause mariage to be easy vnto a woman: that is, if she chaunce on a good and a wyse husbande. ¶O foolysshe frendes, and maydes also that set more by theim, that be fayre, or ryche, or of noble byrth: than them that be good: and caste your selfe in to perpetuall care. For if thou be maried to a fayre one, he wyll be proude of his person: And if thou be maryed to a riche one, his substance maketh hym stately: And if thou be maryed to one of great byrthe, his kynred exalteth his stomacke.

¶Nowe if thou be maried vnto one for his fayrenes, whiche hath neyther reason, nor vertue, nor any droppe of witte, as it is ofte proued by experience, as the wise man of Grece saied by these goodly Innes, where be foule hostesses: by lyke reason thou myghtest mary an ymage or a peynted table. Canste thou fynde in thy harte to be a fooles wyfe, for his goodes? Than myghteste thou as well desire to bee maried to an image of golde. Woldeste thou be maryed vnto a gentylmanne borne, whiche is of fylthy and noughtie liuynge, for his bloude? as well than thou myghtest chose the ymage of Scipio or Caesar: And in very dede it were better to be maryed vnto an ymage, or a picture, or to a peynted table, than to be maried to a vicious, or a foolisshe, or

a brayneles man. Wherfore I maie better compare theim vnto asses, or swyne, lyons, or wolfes, than to mad men. And in tyme passed, I thought it had been but a fable, that men telle, howe Pasyphae the queene of Candy, dyd lye with a bulle: and other as vngracious dedes as that, whiche I haue hearde saye, other women haue done: but nowe me thinketh theim al likely enoughe to be true, whan I se women can fynde in their hartes, to tomple and lye with vicious and filthy men, and dronkerdes, and braulers, and dawysh, and braine les, cruell, and murderars. For what difference is betwene them and asses, swyne, bores, bulles, or beares? What madnes is it to haue delyte in suche men, and to flee and eschewe wyse men: as Plutarke the philosopher saith, and flee honest men and good men, as warely as they wold flee from venemous beastes? Wherfore it was well and aptly spoken, that a countrey man of myne sated, that the nature of women was in chosyng men, lyke vnto the female wolues: whiche amonge a great sorte of males, take the foulest and worst fauoured: but men neuer cast any fauoure to a woman, but for some good proporcee, eyther of substance, person, or wytte. And women many tymes loue some men, because there is nothynge in them worthy to be beloued. Wherby they declare the more playnely, that they go without reason. Whiche thynges I saie by some that haue nothyng a do with their reason, but all geuen and applied vnto their body: Agaynst whome I haue spoken sharpely, because they dote, and fonde good ponge men, and brynge theim to filthines and foly, whan they wolde fayne please the women, and se they can not, excepte they go wyde frome all condicions perteynynge

vnto

vnto men. For lyke as children, whiche be geuen all vnto sporte and plaie, neyther haue discrecion for lacke of age, to comprehende any depe mattier, haue onelye in price and regarde those, that can handle theyr sportes and pastymes the mooste aptely. So women sette all vpon pleasures, and voluptees, wantonnes, and foly, thynke no man wyse, but those that can well conuey suche mattiers: and what so euer perteyneth to wytte and sadnes, they counte foly. So their discrecion is blynded so sore, that they loue, esteme and set by fooles, and counte theim for great wise men: and abhorre them that be wyse in dede, hate, dispise, and lothe theim, and take theim for fooles: In lyke maner as folkes that be sycke of a great agewe, wene that sweete meate is bitter: and as sowes haue more delyte in myre and durte, than in swete flowres.

¶ What hope shall we haue of theim, that haue so feble discrecion and so corrupted? For maydes that desyre and wysshe for suche husbandes, in whome bee the externall gyftes of Fortune, whiche the people calle good, nor haue no respecte vnto the inwarde goodnes, they be worthy to fele perpetuall sorowe, and to bee punysshed for their errour so longe as they lyue: because they dispise that, that is the more noble and excellente in dede, in comparison of that, whiche is more vile and lesse worthe. O foolysshe mayde, whiche haddest leauer haue continuall sorowe in golde and sylke, than haue pleasure in wollen clothe: whiche hadst leauer be hated and beaten in raiment of purple and riche colour, than bee loued and set by in a course garmente of meane colour. If thou haddest leauer haue that other, take that thou haste chosen, nor bee not discontente with that,

which thou hast wittingly taken with thine owne hands.

¶ Moreouer, we haue harde tell of some foolyshe husbandes, that they haue kylled theyr wyues: as Justina a mayde of Rome, borne of nobe bloude, whan hir father and mother maryed hir vnto a ponge man of great possessions, but of smalle discrecion and witte: whiche whan he sawe his wyues whyte necke, as she was stowpyng to vnlose hir shoone, fell streyght into a suspection and ielosy ouer hir, because of hir beautie: and with a swoorde cutte hir necke in sundre, of whome was made this epitaphy folowyng.

My cruell husbande to death hath me dooen
And with a swoorde my necke in sundre cutte
As I was stoupyng to vntie my shoone
And to pulle out my pretty foote,
And that beside the bedde, where I was layde
With hym not longe before. O harde and cruell mynde
In that same place, where as he had hadde
My maydenheade, to shewe hym so vnkynde
Yet I neuer offended, wherfore I ought to die,
All myghtie god to recorde I take:
And lo nowe here slayne I lie,
Thus pleased Fortune myne ende to make.
But fathers all, example take by me
Justina, as warely as you can
If ye loue your daughter tenderly,
That you ne mary hir to a foolyshe man.

¶ Fathers and mothers whiche marye theyr chyldrene vnto good and vertuous mates, doo not onely prouyde well for them, but also for them selfe. For they get them suche sons and daughters in lawe, that shalbe succour and ayde vnto theym in theyr olde age: And if they be naughtie

naughty and vngracious, thei prouide them of enemies.

¶ Nowe of the sonne in lawe, we haue an example in the gospell: For saincte Peters mother in lawe, whan she laie sicke of a great agewe, was made holle of our lorde, at the instance of hir son in lawe. Suche it was to haue so good a sonne in lawe, that Christe disdeigned not to take vnto his disciple. Mat.8. Mar.1.

¶ And of the daughter in lawe, we reade an example in the boke of Ruth: that whan Noemy came home into Jury (hir owne countrey) out of the lande of Moab, hir husbande and hir sonnes beinge dead, and broughte with hir, hir .ii. sonnes wyues, of whom the one called Orpha by name, retourned againe to hir owne countrey and frendes, but Ruth kepte stil with hir mother in lawe, and bothe conforted hir with wordes, and nourysshed and kepte hir with hir labour: in so muche that Noemy founde in Ruthe, bothe the loue of a daughter, and diligent seruice of a sonne. Noemy had bene a wydowe and deserte in deede, if she had hadde no better a daughter in lawe than Orpha was: but in as muche as she had Ruthe, she was not all destitute of chyldren, neyther had no cause to name hir selfe Mara, that is to saie bytter, as hir mynde was to bee named. Also after that Ruth had borne the prophet Esaie by hir secounde husbande called Booz, women dyd make as great semblaunce of gladnes vnto Noemy, as thoughe she hadde had of hir owne daughter or hir owne sonne, not onely one neuew, but as thoughe she had had seuen sons hir selfe: For they saied to hir in this maner: There is one borne nowe of thy daughter in lawe, whiche shall loue the, and be better vnto the, than thoughe thou haddest seuen sonnes.

¶Nowe afore I make an ende of this boke, I will answere vnto a madde and a franticke opinion, whiche bothe maydens and wyues haue, and all the common people in generall, that thynke it is expedient for maydes, that are come to lawfull age of mariage, to be sene oft abrode amonge people, goodly and pykedly araied, and to kepe company and communicacion with men, to be eloquente in speache, and counnynge in daunsynge and syngyng: yea and to loue hym afore hande, whom they entende to marye. For so (they saie) they shall the more lyghtly mete with a bargeine. A man myght make answere to all this at ones, but I wyll examine it from poynt to poynt, to content not onely the mindes of wise men, but also of them that be rude and ignorant.

¶What wyse man, I praie you, woulde euer counsaile this thing, knowynge, that yll is not to be dooen, that good maie come therof: and specially where the yll is euident enoughe, and the good neyther certayne nor customed to folowe commonly vpon the deede. Wherfore if the mayde can get no mariage, excepte she infecte hir mynde, and ieopetde hir honestie on this facion, it were better neuer to mary: orels to mary onely Christe, than to marye fyrste vnto the diuell, that she maie bee maryed to a man afterwarde.

¶Nowe .ii. thynges there be, the moste precious that a woman canne bringe with hir to a man, Honestie of body, and good fame: nor there is no man so foolysshe and madde, neyther so set vpon beautie and couetyse of goodes, neyther so vngracious and so vnthriftie of lyuynge, but he wyll be content with any wyfe, hauynge these two: whiche if she lacke, howe can he be contente? Than wolde I wyt, whether mayde is the more lykely to be

to bee of good fame and behauour, whether shee that bideth most at home, or she that walketh muche abrode? At whome there is none occasion of iuell, and foorthe abrode euery place is full. And of hir that tarieth at home, no man maketh question or argument: But of hir that walketh muche about: euery man wyll saie his opinion: where amonge so diuerse sentences a mayde shal soone catche a blot: whiche wyll stycke in no place more sooner than on a mayde, neither worse to get out. Or whiche of them two dooe men set more by? and whether will they thinke of moste honest demeaner, hir that they see eyther neuer, or but selde, or hir, whome they mete in euery corner? Verily I thynke they wyll not beleue, that she kepeth hir honestie verily wel, that walketh so ofte foorthe. And as for prouidynge of hir maryage, I thynke it shulde bee more profitable for hir, to be harde telle of, than seen. For a mayde that is ofte in syght, shall chance either to say or dooe, that maie displease hym that shulde haue hir: or some of theim that be of his counsayle: or that he geueth credence and trust vnto. Wherby many tymes mariages be broken, euen in the poynt of makyng.

And where as they speake of clothynge, wherewith to make hir gaye, if she be maryed but for that, shee muste needes be hated, whan she is with out theim. For she muste needes some tymes lay awaie that wede, and be with hir husbande at home in meane araie. For commonly, as we greatly lyke them, in whom wee fynd any speciall goodnes, that we loked not for, lykewise we hate theim as sore, that disapoynt our hope of any good bountie. For if thou seme pyked and proppe vnto thy spouse, and arte not so in deede, after that he hath

taken some great hope of thy beautie, he muste nedes hate the, whan he seeth hym selfe disponted.

¶ Moreouer I coude name bothe in this countrey and in myne owne, dyuerse maydes, whiche coude neuer get mariage, because that men were abasshed of theyr costely apparell. What saye they: this woman wolde spende vp all hir maryage good in one gowne, or one brooche. Therto beyng ouer richely apparelled, maides be reken lyght.

¶ And as for those that keepe muche company with men, what man is there, that will not suspecte yll by them? Or what husbande shall she fynde so patient, that will be content to haue his wyfe to company styll and common with men? or wolde not rather haue suche one, as wolde more gladly company with hir husbande alone, than with a great multitude of men? where one shall tempte hir mynde with eloquence, an other with comlines of person, some with beautie, some with liberte, and some with noblenes. For as for maydes to be eloquent of speche, that is to saie great bablers, is a token of a lyght mynde and shrewde condicions: In so muche that he that shall mary hir, shal thinke he hath a serpent and no wife. For yonge men wyll preyse hir vnto hir face, that is full of talke, and a iolly dauncer, and full of mery conceytes, and playe, and pleasaunte, and call hir well manered, and well broughte vppe, all to haue hir at their pleasure, but none to marye hir: and all beleue that they maie quickely opteyne theyr purpose of suche one: but neuer a one wyll be glad to haue suche one to his wyfe, that he seeth is applyng vnto euery mans wyll: they preyse for the tyme all that she doothe, because they haue delyte therin. But and the

foolyshe maydes coulde here what men speake afterwardes amonge theim selfe one vnto an nother, with out dissimulacion: than shulde they knowe in deede, howe hertely they pyysed theym and lyked theim: they shulde vnderstande than, that whan the men called hir mery concepted, they ment they were bablars, and chatters: and whan they called theim lusty tyzers, they ment they were lyght mynded: and where they called theim well nurtred, they ment they were wanton.

¶ But some wolde saie here, yet by those meanes they come by mariage. I graunt, in dede some do: but the moste parte dothe not. For bothe mo be maried, and that also vnto better husbandes, that neuer go about to tempte no man, the whiche whan they see theim selfe begiled with the women, they kylle theim vp with yll intreatynge. And this the maide maie be sure of, that shee shall neuer haue good lyfe with that husbande, whiche she hath gotten by wiles, and craftes. Or if there be any man so mad or foolyshe, that hadde leauer haue suche a woman to his wyfe, than one that louethe sobrietousnes, and is sad bothe of behauour and aparel, and mylde of chere: suche a man wolde not I mary my doughter to: for she must nede loue lewdnes and vice, that setteth moze by suche knackes, than by vertue and goodnes.

¶ Nowe wyll I speake a fewe woozdes of loue, the whiche doteth all maydes foz the most parte, and disceiueth theim greatly, and bzyngeth theim to muche mischiefe. For it dothe not become a mayde to make any signe, that she wolde fayne be maryed, or that she loueth any yonge man to wedde. For if she loue hym afore she haue hym, that it be knowen, what shall he thynke,

but that she wyll as lyghtly loue an other as she hathe doone hym, whome as yet she ought to shewe no loue vnto: neither he will beleue, that she loueth hym alone, seynge there is as great cause to loue other. And if he shulde mary hir, he wyll thynke she will haue as good mynd to other, as hym selfe, whā she is so lyght of loue. ¶Let euery body excuse the matter as they wyll, but in very deede euery woman, that loueth any man beesyde hir husbande, is accursed, if shee haue a dooe with hym: and though she haue not, yet is she an harlotte in minde. And there hath been many, that haue loued so outragiously, that they haue been obedyent vnto the pleasure of those men, whome they hoped shuld be their husbandes: And afterwarde these men haue dispised and caste theim vpwhiche in my mynde was well and wysely doone. For they be vnworthy for to be maryed, that dare shewe an example vnto those men, whome they shulde haue, howe well they can fynde in their hert to lye with a man, that is not their husbande. For by likelyhod they wyll bothe do that same with other men afore their mariage, and in their maryage with theyr adulterers. There is no daye, wheron these thynges by chance not in euery citee, nor there is no woman so ignorant what is dooen in the citee: but she hereth tel of these thynges.

¶I haue herd tel in this countrey, that wowars haue been forsaken for none other cause, but because there was no loue betwene the parties afore. For the ponge women saied, they coulde not loue theim, nor fynde in theyr hert to haue theim in mariage, whome they loued not, nor knowe before: and this is a great vse they say, in Candy. What nede is it to rebuke suche mindes with

wordes,

woordes, whiche who so doeth not perceiue to bee vnchaste, I holde hir farre more naughtie than they be. Nowe than, louest not thou thy husbande, because he is coupled vnto the by goddes lawes and gods commandement, but because thou arte vsed to his loue before: So do drabbes and harlottes, which for like cause loue theyr louers: and thou arte not farre vnlike vnto those drabbes. And so it chaunceth vnto suche women, euen by the punysshemente of god, that all the loue, whiche they ought to kepe in theyr mariage, they spende it out afore. Wherof this common saiyng came vppe: That they that mary for loue, shall leade their lyfe in sorowe. For it chaunceth by many, that after the heate of loue is ones paste, there foloweth greatte hate: whiche thynge ofte tymes maketh wonder and talke amonge the people, whan they heare tell, howe so great louers within iii. or. iiii. daies fall at debate, and begynne to deuorce or the bryde cake bee eaten: Nor it is no meruayle: for neyther the fyre maie laste, that lacketh woode: neyther loue that is not nourysshed with honest louynge. For amonge yll folkes, as Cicero saieth, can bee no sure frendeshyp. Wherfore it is not expediente to make maryages by loue afore hande, neyther to couple and bynde that moste holy charitee with so fylthy and brytell bandes: and yet muche worse is it to make theym to mary by stryuynge, and hate, thretnynge, and sute: as whan they goe to lawe together, the man for the woman, bearynge hir in hande, that she is his wyfe: and the woman in lyke maner for the man.

¶ I neuer hearde tell of more foolyshenes, than for a woman to labour to haue a man againste his will, with whome she shall bothe lyue atwynne: and excepte he

loue

loue hir, she shall lyue in perpetuall sorowe. And loue muste be gotten with fayre meanes, and not compelled: For he will neuer bee a sure frende, that is drawen and holden by force. What a madnes is it to begynne that sacrament of holy loue with hate? I wolde not, so god me helpe, haue a seruaunt against his will: muche lesse a mate: neither it is not good to compell a man against his will: Nor I woulde the woman shoulde be maryed vnto hym, excepte he desyre hir with all his herte. Nor it becometh not the maydes frendes to praie or labour for a maryage, or ones to offre the mayde of their partie: but the man shulde seke for mariage: and so it shuld be done in dede, sauyng that money ruleth and ordreth all thyng. For nowe they be maryed vnto money, and money marieth. And as Seneca saieth, Men drawe theyr wyues to them with their fingers. And therfore we se so many sory and vnlucky maryages, whan bothe the partees see them selfe coupled vnto the money, and not vnto the man or the women. Therefore bothe of theim embraceth and holdeth faste it. And as for the wyfe, the husbande kepeth hir but as his concubine, and she hym as auoutrer: neyther loueth one an other, but for the fylthy pleasure of lechery: and elles either hateth and enuieth other. But they that wolde kepe the nature of thynges, holle and pure, neyther corrupte them with wronge vnderstandyng, shoulde reken, that wedlocke is a bande and couplynge of loue, beneuolence, frendshyppe, and charitee, comprehendyng with in it all names of goodnes, swetenes, and amitee. Therfore let the mayde neyther catche, and disceiue bee subtyltee hym, that shoulde be hir inseparable felowe, nor pulle and drawe by playne violence: but take and be

taken

taken by honestie, simple, plaine and good maner, that neyther of theim complaine with bothe theyr harmes: or saie they were disceiued or compelled.

¶ Here endeth the firste boke of the instruction of a Christen woman.

THE SECONDE BOKE OF THE INSTRVCTION OF A CHRISTEN VVOMAN.

¶ Of wedlocke. Cap. i.

THIS is no place here to reason eyther the laudes or dispraises of wedlocke. Nor the olde questions are to bee touched: as, Is it for a wyse man to wedde a wyfe: Nor the questyons of our christen men, concernynge wedlocke, syngle lyfe, and virginitee, and other, that saincte Augustyne, and other doctours of our christen faithe haue disputed. I knowe, there haue been some that haue sore rebuked wedlocke, and that not onely heretickes, as the Manicheis, that vtterlye commaunded to absteine from mariage: whose errours be cleane dampned and banysshed, but also pagans, whiche haue geuen iudgemente of the holle kynde of women, vpon certayne euyll, ouer muche folowynge the common gyse, whiche vpon the knowlage of a fewe, deme the holle nacion. So the Carthaginenses were defamed as false of promise: So the Cilicians as theues and robbers: the Romaynes as couetous: the Grekes as inconstaunce and varyable.

¶The honeste wyues oughte to hate and blame the naughtie wyues: as a shame and sklander vnto all the kynde. And truely no man durste euer so farre dispraise woman kynde: but he muste nedes confesse, that a good woman is the beste treasure, and moste lucky and prosperous thynge that can be. And as Xenophon saieth, she is the greattest cause of mans felicitee. There is nothynge more sweete than a good wyfe, saieth the wyse man Theognis. Lyke wise Xystus in his sentences, calleth hir mans ioye. Euripides the poete, whiche was sharpely vexed with. ii. naughtie wyues, stuffed his tragedies with rebukes and raylynge on women, and he was named in a greke woorde, the hater of women: yet neuer the lesse he doubted not to affirme, that no pleasure was lyke theyrs, that had good wyues. And Hesiodus the poete, a verate ennemy of women, saieth: That as nothynge is more infortunate than a man, that chaunceth on an eupll wyfe: so lyke wyse no greatter felicitee and welthe any man maie haue, than hath he that hath a good wyfe.

¶Kynge Salomon, whiche was beside hym selfe for women, and of the moste wyse, made the moste vnwyse, often tymes as cursynge his wycked dedes, he syerslye rebuketh women. But so yet that he sheweth playnely by whome he mente. For in his prouerbes he writeth, that an vnwyse woman and full of boldenes, shall lacke breade. And as a tre is consumed of the timbre worme, so he saieth is a man of an eupll wyfe. But loke in the same boke, howe goodly and gaye is the praise of a good woman: of whome he saieth thus, Noble is hir husbande in the gates, whan he sytteth with the auncient fathers of the erth. Fortitude and beautie shall be

the

the rayment of an holy woman, and she shall laugh in the laste daye. She hath opened hir mouth vnto wisedome, and the lawe of mekenes is in hir tonge. Hir childzen haue rysen vp and called hir the moste blessed: and hir husbande hath commended hir. Many women haue gethered ryches: but thou hast passed theim all.

¶ These and many good wozdes hath the wyse kynge spoken: whiche are appzoued and alowed of euery wise man with one assent.

¶ Nowe I kozce not foz those disputacions, oz moze lyke sermons, that sharpe witted men haue made of wedlocke. Foz doutles all lerned men byd wed: whiche thynge they dyd theim selfe. The. vii. wyse wen of Grece were maryed fyzst, and after that Pythagozas, Socrates, Aristotel, and Theopzast, both the Catons, Cicero, and Senec: because they well percyued, that nothynge was moze after nature, than the couplynge of man and woman: wherby mankynde, beynge in sundzy persons moztall, is made in all together euerlastynge: and wherby a man yeldeth agayne vnto his successours, that whiche he taketh of his pzedecessours: and as it were rendzeth a benefite vnto nature.

¶ Aristotell in his mozall bokes exhozteth wyse men vnto maryage, not onely to thentent to haue chyldzen, but also because of company. Foz that is the pzincipal and gretteste vnitee that can be. Foz thus goth the matter in deede: Of that consideracion and vniuersalle frendship, wherwith all folkes are knytte to gether as bzetherne discended of god one father of all thynges, where with nature hir selfe, that in all men is the same, byndeth vs to gether with a certayne charitee: moze nere is that frendeshippe, whiche is amonge folkes of

one faithe: and it is plucked moze narowe by mans oz-
dynaunce and lawe ciuyle. Foz citizens kauoure moze
one an other, than they do kozeyns: and of citizens our
speciall frendes are moste dere to vs: of theim wee loue
beste our owne kyns folke: and of kyns folke nothyng
is moze nere than the wyfe: whome the firste father of
mankynde, as soone as he sawe hir, said by and by, that
it was a bone of his bones, and flesshe of his flesche. And
Gen.2. whan there was yet neyther fathers noz mothers, he
gaue a lawe, as in the name of nature, saiyng in this
wyse. For hir sake a man shall leaue bothe father and mo-
ther, and abide with his wyfe.

¶ Who than can denye, but that wedlocke is a thynge
moste holy? whiche god ozdeyned in paradise, whan
mankynde was yet pure and cleane, with no spotte de-
fyled. He choseth it in his mother: he allowed it with
Mat.1. Luc.1. his pzesence: and wolde do his first myzacle, at the so-
Joan.2. lemnitee of mariage and there shewe an euydent to
ken of his godhead, vnto the entent he myght declare,
that he was comen to saue them, that were bothe loste
by folkes so coupled, and bozne by folkes so coupled.
But I wzyte not here of the pzeyses of wedlocke, wher-
vpon often tymes most eloquent men haue made longe
sermons. Foz I do onely instruct vertuous women.

¶ What a woman ought to haue in mynde, whan she marieth. Cap.ii.

VVHAT tyme a woman marieth, she shulde call to
remembzance the beginnyng of wedlocke, and bu-
sily consider in hir mynde and thought the lawes of it:
and so she ought to pzepare hir self, that so great a sacra
ment, firste vnderstand, she maie afterwarde fulfil it.

After

After that god the prynce and maker of this excellent worke, had brought man into this worlde, he thought it vnconuenient to leaue hym all alone, and so inigned to hym a liuynge creature, most lyke vnto hym of mind and shape, with whose conuersacion and compenable woordes, he myght swetely spende his tyme, and also because of generacion, if it pleased hym.

And in dede wedlocke was not ordeyned so muche for generacion, as for certayne company of lyfe, and contynuall felowshyp. Neyther the name of husbande is a name of bodily pleasure, but of vnitee and affinitee. God led the woman to the man, whiche meaneth none other thynge, but that god hym selfe was chiefe author and maker of wedlocke. Therfore Christe in the gospell calleth theim coupled of god. As soone as the man loked vpon the female of his kynde, he began to loue hir aboue all thynges, and saied, Nowe is this a bone of my bones, and flesshe of my flesshe. And for hir a man shall forsake bothe father and mother, and abyde with his wyfe: and they shall be two in one flesshe. Where it is saied in one flesshe, it is to be vnderstanden one flesshe, and flesshe after the proprety of the Hebrewe speeche signifieth mankynde bothe man and woman. So that they whiche firste were two, man and woman, coniuigned in wedlocke, be made one. This is the marueylous mistery of wedlocke, so to myngle and to couple the man and the woman, that two shall be made one. The whiche thyng also it hath dooen in Christe and the churche, as teacheth Paule the apostle, which no power saue only goddes power, myght bringe about: Of necessitee that thynge must be most holy, at whiche god is so speciall present. Therefore what tyme a woman

Gen.2.

Mat.19. Mar.10.

Gen.2.

Ephe.5.

cometh here vnto, she shulde not suppose, that she cometh to daunce, play, and feast, but must ponder higher thynges in hir mynde. God is the ouer sear, the churche is the medyatrice in mariage. For whiche cause that thynge that is iuigned and fastned together by so highe auctorite, Chryste suffereth not eyther to be broken or losed of any mortall creature, saiynge in his gospell:

Mat.19. Mar.10. That god hath iuigned together, man maie not deuide. Nowe if it be not lefull to lose it, and that knot is not to be vnkyt with mans handes, which god hath knyt: Lyke wyse no man ought to open that thynge, whiche

Apoc.3. is shut with the key of Dauyd: whiche all onely that immaculate lambe hath in keppng.

Nowe than streight in the begynnynge, thou that arte an honest woman, appoynt thy selfe, that thou maiste in suche wyse bynde hym vnto the with loue, whome god by the sacramente hathe iuigned vnto the: that the band maie be esy and lyght. Nor neuer desire that knot to be vnknyt, nor cast not thy selfe and hym bothe that is knyt with the, in to greke without ende, and perpetuall mysery. For a great parte of this matter resteth in thy hand: eyther with pure chastitee, meknes, burum vsynge of thy selfe, to haue thy husbande pleasaunt and louynge vnto the, and to lede thy lyfe welthfully: or els with thy vices of mynde and body, to haue hym krowarde, and crapbed, and to ordeyne for thy selfe greuous turment, whiche by deathe shal not be ended. Thou shalt toyle, thou shalt weepe, thou shalte be troubled, thou shalte curse the daie that euer thou were iuigned vnto hym, thou shalte curse hym that the begate, and hir that the bare, and all thy kyn, ye and al theim that any thynge dyd in thy maryage, if thou,

thzoughe thyne owne vices cause thy husbande to hate the. But on the other partie, if thou by vertuous lyuyng and buxumnes, geue hym cause to loue the, thou shalte be maistres in a mery house, thou shalte reioyse, thou shalt be gladde, thou shalt blesse the date that thou were maryed vnto hym, and all them that were helping there vnto. The wyse sentence saieth: A good woman by lowely obeysaunce ruleth hir husbande.

¶ Plinius the younger, whan he hadde a wyfe as his mynde despzed, he was mylde and gentyll vnto hir againe, and thanked Hispula his wyues aunt, bothe foz his owne and his wyues sake, saiyng: I thanke you, that pzouided me of hir: and she thanketh you, because you gotte hir me, and as it were, haue chosen the one vnto the other.

¶ Aboue all this, that fyzste, and (as I suppose) onely chaptre of the lawes of wedlocke, that they shall be two in one person, is the veraie ground of wedlocke, and the bonde of that mosste holy felowshyp. Wherfoze if a woman directe all hir thoughtes, hir wozdes, and hir dedes vnto this poynte, that is, to kepe truely and safely the purenes of wedlocke: she can not but lyue well and vertuously. Therfoze an honeste and a chaste woman ought euer to haue this in mynde. And she shall study bothe daie and nyght, howe she maie fulfyll this lawe, and expzesse and shewe it in dede: trustyng veraily here vpon, that what so euer she be, that fulfylleth this lawe, that is to saie, that rekeneth hir selfe and hir husbande all one person, and so lyueth, that she maie bothe be in deede, and appere to bee all one with hir husbande: she can lacke no kynde of vertue: and she that dothe not so, shall haue no vertue at all.

Dreue=

TO reuerente power of the diuine wooꝛde, whiche in thꝛe wooꝛdes hath compꝛehended as muche as moꝛtall men goe aboute to expꝛesse, noꝛ yet can not with longe sermons. Wherfoꝛe I wil make none other lawe of maꝛyage: foꝛ onely this is sufficient, onely this conteyneth as muche as either mans wytte can conceyue, oꝛ mans eloquence can vtter. Therfoꝛe the woman shall not beleue my fantasye, but the fyꝛste father of our kynde Adam, oꝛ rather obey Chꝛiste, commaundyng in the gospel of Mathewe, That they shalbe two in one person. And than hath she fulfylled all the dutie of a vertuous wyfe. Mat.19.

¶ This one pꝛecepte of god myghte haue eased me of all labour of wꝛitynge, if that it had entred so depe in to womennes hertes, that they myghte bothe haue well perceyued it, and beare in mynde, and executed it. But nowe to the entente that it maie stycke moꝛe faste, and growe moꝛe surely, it muste bee tourned and handled many waies, and be made in manye facions, and so bee sette afoꝛe theyꝛ eies, and taughte vnto theim, that they maie bothe take and kepe it the better. Not withstandynge a wyse woman shall remembꝛe, that all that euer I saie, is but one pꝛecepte, as it were one man in diuers apparell.

¶ Of two the greatteste poyntes in a maried woman. Cap. iii.

AMONGE all other vertues of a maried woman, two there oughte to bee moste speciall and greatteste: the whiche onely if she haue theim, maie cause mariage to be sure, stable, durable, easy, lyght, swete, and happy: and againe, if the one bee lacked: it shall be vnsure, peynfull, vnpleasant, and intollerable, yea and full of misery, and wꝛetchednesse. These two ver-

tues,

tues, that I meane, be Chastitie and great loue towarde hir husbande. The fyrste shee muste bynge with hir forth of hir fathers house. The second, she must take after she is ones entred in at hir husbandes doore, and both father and mother, kynsfolkes, and all hir frendes lefte, she shall reken to fynde all these onely in hir husbande. And in bothe these vertues she shall represent the image of holy churche: whiche is bothe moste chaste and most faithefully dothe keepe trouthe and promyse vnto hir spouse Christe: whiche beynge solicited, and laboured within of so many wowers, that is to saie, christen folkes, that haue been commune heretykes, and besyged without of pagans and Iewes: yet neuer hath been wonne nor corrupted: and hath euer reken ed al hir good and treasure to reste in hir onely spouse Christe.

¶ A maried woman oughte to bee of greatter chastitee than an vnmaryed. For if that thou than pollute and defyle thy chastitee, as god forbede thou shuldest, herke I praie the, howe many thou shalt offende and displease at ones, with one wicked deede: Howe many reuengers thou shalt prouoke againste the. They be so many and so heynous, that amonge some a man can make no difference, but I shall gether them without any order, and set theim before thine eies.

¶ Fyrste thou offendeste two, whiche ought to bee vnto the bothe moste in price, and mooste deare and beste, that is to saie, almyghtie god, by whose meanes ye were coupled togyther, and by whose diete thou haste made other to kepe the purenes of body. And nexte vnto god thou offendest thyne husbande: vnto whom onely thou haste geuen thy selfe: in whome thou breakest all loues and charitees, if thou ones bee defyled. For thou arte

vnto hym as Eue was vnto Adam: that is to saie his daughter, his sister, his companion, and his wyfe, and as I myghte saie, an other hym selfe. Wherefore thou desperate woman, that haste abused thy selfe so, thou farest in lyke maner, as thoughe thou haddest strangled, destroyed, or murthered thy selfe. Thou hast broken the greattest bande that can be in the worlde: Thou haste broken, thou false woman, the moste holy bande of temperall lawe: that is to saie, thy fayethe and thy trouthe, whiche ones geuen, one enmeinye in the fielde will kepe to an other, though he shulde stande in daunger of death, and thou like a false wretche doest not kepe it to thyne husbande: whiche oughte to bee more deare vnto the by ryghte, than thy selfe. Thou defylest the moste pure churche, whiche holpe to couple the: thou breakest worldely company: thou breakeste the lawes: thou offendeste thy countreye: thou beatest thy father with a bytter scurge: thou beateste thy sorowfull mother, thy systers, thy bretherne, thy kyns folkes, alyances, and all thy frendes: thou geueste vnto thy companions an example of mischiefe, and castest an euerlastynge blot and shame vpon thy kynne: thou, lyke a cruell mother, castest thy childzene in to suche a necessitee, that thei can neuer here speake of theyr mother, without shame, nor of theyr father, without doubtynge.

What greatter offence can they dooe? or what greatter wyckednes can they infecte theim selfe withall that destroye theyr countreye, and perysshe all lawes and iustice, and murther theyr fathers and mothers, and fynally defyle and marre all thynges, bothe spirituall and temporall? what good sauncte, or god, or what man thynkeste thou can fauour the, that dooest so? All thy

countrey

countrey it selfe, thy parentes, all thy kynsfolke, and thyne husbande hym selfe shall damne and punisshe the: Almighty god wyll auenge most rigoriously his maiestee so displeased and offended of the.

¶ And knowe thou this woman, that the chastitee and honestie, whiche thou haste, is not thyne, but committed, and betaken vnto thy keppynge by thyne husbande. Wherfore thou dooest the more wronge, to geue awaie that thynge, whiche is an other bodyes, without the owners licence. And therfore the maryed woman of Lacedemon, whan a ponge man desyred of hir that vnhoneste thynge, answered hym: I wolde graunt the thyne askynge ponge man, if it were myne owne to geue that thou askeste: but that thynge, whiche thou woldeste haue, whyle I was vnmaryed, was my fathers, and nowe is myne husbandes. She made hym a mery and a wyse answere. But saynte Paule speketh full wysely for the monicion of good women, where he teacheth the churche of god, saiyng: A woman hath no power of hir owne body, but hir husbande, whiche saiynge ought so muche to keepe a woman, except she bee to vngracious, frome all fylthy actes, that saynt Augustine dothe not alow perpetuall chastitee in a maried woman, without hir husbande be contente with the same. Wherfore there is an holy man, whether it bee sayncte Hieronyme, or some other I wote not well, that dispreyseth one Celantyne a vertuous woman and a good wyfe, because shee auowed perpetuall chastitee without hir husbandes consent. For a woman hathe no power on hir owne body, no not vnto the goodnes of continence. 1. Cor. 7.

¶ Nowe than lette euery man consider, what lycence

she hathe that whyle vnto the naughtines of myslbehauyng hir body: she is discommended for chastitee, hir husbande not beyng of counsel. Nowe than, what shall she haue, that committeth adultery agaynst hir husbandes wil? Herke what wordes this holy man saieth: But this I haue vnderstande also, whiche trowbleth and greueth me not a lyttell, that thou hast taken vpon the that good purpose of chastitee, without thine husbandes will, cleane contrarye to the commaundemente of
1. Cor. 7. the apostle: whiche in this case commaundeth, not onely the wyfe to be subiect to the husbande, but also the husbande to the wyfe. The wyfe (sauthe he) hath no power on hir owne body, but hir husbande: Lyke wyse the husbande hath no power of his owne bodye, but his wyfe: and thou as though thou haddest forgotten the bonde of mariage, nor remembryng thy bargayne and promyse, hast made a bowe of chastitee to god, thyne husbande vnknowynge, but it is ieoperdy to promyse that, the whiche is in an others power. And I can not thynke that gyfte very pleasant vnto god, where one geueth awaie that, whiche perteyneth vnto two. Thus saieth this holye man. whiche if he take vp so sharply, this vertuous woman for an holy thynge geuynge, whiche was not in hir power for to geue, what woordes suppose ye, wolde he vse, in rebukynge a wicked or a fylthy deede?

And that thou maiste vnderstande more playnely, howe great a vice adultery is reckened, bothe of god and man. Chryste in his gospell, where he wolde al-
Mat. 19. gates that men shall keepe their wyues, nor deuorse from theim for none occasion: yet he dooeth except adultery. Therfore a man must be content with his wife,

though

though she be a dronkard, though she be ireful, though she be shrewde, a waster, a glotten, a vacabonde, a skowlder, a rayler: onely an adulterar is at a mannes lybertee to forsake. Also the other vices be displeasant in dede, but yet they maie be suffred: but she that breaketh the promise of wedlocke, is intollerable. Wherfore Homer the poete, amonge the cursynges and banynges, that he geueth vnto certayne men, putteth this for one of the sorest: I praie god (saieth he) their wyues moughte medle with other men. Also Job prayeth, that if euer he laie in waite to dooe his frendes displeasure, this misfortune myght lyght vpon hym, saiyng: I praie god my wyfe maie be an other mans harlotte: and other men mought lye downe vpon hir.

¶And these poyntes dydde not onely holpe christen women vnderstande, but also pagans: of whome there were some, whiche after they were corrupted, thought them selfe vnwoorthy for to lyue, as Lucretia, wife vnto Collatyne: whose acte is most famous, for the marualous loue that shee had vnto chastitee, and many mo, whiche leste they shulde lose their chastitee, perysshed theim selfe.

¶What tyme the citee of Athens was wonne by Lisander the kynge of Lacedemon, and .xxx. tyrantes were sette to gouerne the citee, and they ruled moste proudely and hautely, and iaped and mocked the honestie of many women, the wyfe of Niceratus slewe hir owne selfe to escape, that she shulde not be at their filthy pleasure.

¶Also the wyues of the Almans, of whome Caius Marius had slayne an infynite multytude, desyred hym, that they myght bee geuen vnto the religious

maydes of Rome, called the virgins of Vesta, saiyng, that they wolde lyue as chastly as they shuld. Whiche thyng whan they coulde not obteyne of that harde stomacke of Marius, all in the nyght nexte ensuyng hanged theim selfes.

Also in the warre, whiche the people of Phoces had with the Thessalians, and the Thessalyans came into their countrey with an incredyble power, Delphantus the chiefe cappytayne of the Phoceans, counsailed the people to go agaynste their ennempes: but as for children, their wyues, and aged men, with other, that were not able to beare harnepes, to shut theim vp in some secrete place, and to bryngе theim plentie of woode and strawe, that if the hooste were ouercome, they there myghte burne theym selfe. Nowe whan moste parte of the people consented to the same, there rose vp an aged man, whiche saied: It were well dooen to wyt the womens wyl in that matter: that if they agreed therto, than shulde it so be: if not, he saied it was vnreasonable, to appoynte theim suche a thynge agaynste theyr wyll. Where vpon the women were exampned, whiche answered all to gether, that they were very wel agreed, with Delphantus counsaile, and also gaue hym great thankes, because he had so well prouided for the safegarde of theym and of their countrey. And vpon this purpose they were conueied in to a secret place. Nowe be it the Phocians returned agayne with the victory: nor I doubt not, but it was through the meryte of the good women. And thus dyd pagans, whiche lyued in the obscuritee and darkenes of ignorаunce. Wherfore chrysten folkes maie be the more ashamed, whiche bee redemed with the bloud of our lorde, washed with baptisme,

ptisme, instructed with doctrine, and illumined with lyghte.

¶ How she shall behaue hir selfe vnto hir husband. Cap. iiii.

IT were a longe mattier and harde to expresse, and therto wonderous, if I shoulde reherse euery poynte of the wyues duetie vnto hir husbande: Our lorde comprehendeth it in the gospell with one woorde. Therefore let vs remembre, howe we haue saied before, that she is as one bodye with hir husbande. Wherfore she oughte to loue hym none other wyse than hir selfe. I haue saied before, and ofte shall againe: For this is the greatteste vertue of a maryed woman: this is the thynge that wedlocke signifyeth, and commaundeth, that the wyfe shoulde reken to haue hir husbande for bothe father, mother, bretherne, and systers, lyke as Adam was vnto Eue, and as the mooste noble and chaste woman Andromache saied hir husbande Hector was vnto hir, in these worde.

Thou arte vnto me bothe father and mother
Myne owne deare husbande, and welbeloued brother.

¶ And if it be true that men dooe saie, that frendshyp maketh one herte of two: muche more truely and effectually ought wedlocke to dooe the same, whiche farre passeth all maner bothe frendshyp and kynred. Therfore it is not saied, that wedlocke dothe make one man, or one mynde, or one body of two, but clerely one person. Wherfore the woordes that the man spake of the woman, saiyng: For hir sake a man shoulde leaue bothe father and mother, and byde with his wyfe: the same woordes the womanne oughte bothe to saie and thynke with more reason. For all thoughe there be one made of two,

Gen. 2. Mat. 19. Mar. 10.

of two yet the woman is as daughter vnto hir husband, and of nature more weaker. And therefore she needeth his ayde and succour. Wherfore if she be destitute of hir husbande, deserte, and lefte alone, she maie soone take hurte and wronge. Therfore if she be with hir husband, where he is, there hath she bothe hir countrey, hir house, hir father, hir mother, hir frendes, and all hir treasure. Of the whiche thynge Hipsicratea, wyfe vnto Mithridates the kynge of Pontus, gaue good example, whiche folowed hir husbande in mannes apparaile, whan he was beaten and dryuen out of his lande, fleeynge still frome one place vnto an other, not hauing, where to resorte or abyde: and where so euer he was, shee accoumpted there to bee hir ryches, hir realme, and hir countrey. Whyche thyng doubtles was the greatteste coumforte and ease of his sorowe and aduersitee.

¶ Flaccilla, wyfe vnto Nouius Priscus: and Egnatia Mirimilla, wyfe vnto Glitio Gallus, bothe folowed their husbandes out of theyr countrey, whan they were banysshed, with great losse of treasure and possessions: And they rekened theyr husbandes farre aboue all those thynges vnto theym. Wherefore theyr names were had in great honour.

¶ Also Tauria deserued no lesse commendacion, whiche whan hir husbande was outlawde, hydde hym vp betwene the selynge and the rofte of hir chambre, no mo of counsaile but one mayde and hir selfe: and so saued his life with hir owne great ieoperdy.

¶ Also Sulpitia, wyfe vnto Lentulus, whan hir mother Tullia watched hir diligentely, leaste she shoulde folowe hir husbande, that was banysshed, she gotte

vpon

vpon hir poore raymente, and so with two mayde seruauntes, and as many men stale away, and came to hir housbande: nor refused to banysche hir owne selfe for his sake, that hir housband myght se in his outlaury, hir faythfulnesse towarde hym. And there haue bene very many, that had leuer bee in ieoperdy theim selfe, than their housbandes shoulde.

¶ The wyfe of Fernando Gonzalis the erle of Castile, whan the kynge of the Legyon of Germany, whiche is a citee in the parte of Spayne called Austury, hadde hir housbande in prison, shee came vnto hir housbande, as it were to visete hym, and there counsailed hir housbande to chaunge raiment with hir, and steale his way, and leaue hir in the ieoperdye that shulde falle: and so, he dyd. Wherfore the kyng wondryng vpon that great loue of hirs towarde hir husbande, prayed god to sende hym and his children suche wyues, and soolette hir go ageyne to hir husband.

¶ There was also an nother of the same kynredde, whiche was maryed vnto a certeyne kynge of Englande, that what tyme hir housbande in warre ageynste the Sarrayns, hadde catched a great wounde in his arme with a venomed swerde, and so came home in to his owne countrey, nor coude neuer be healed, excepte that venome and matter were sucked out: The kynge seyng, that who so euer shoulde do that dede, were in ieoperdy of their life, wolde suffre no man to take it vpon hym. Wherfore in the nyght, whan he was a slepe, his wyfe losed the bandes of the wounde, fyrste hir housbande not perceyuynge, and after warde dissemblynge, and so bylyttell and lyttel sucked and spitted out the poyson, and prepared the wounde curable

¶ and

and redy to the phisicion. Wherefore I am very sorye, that I haue not the name of that noble woman, whiche were worthy to bee commended with moste eloquente preyses. Howe be it, it is not vnspoken of, for it is red in the actes of Spayne, whiche Rodericus the bishop of Tolet dyd wryte: From whens I shall ones translate with honourable mencion of hir.

Lykewyse vpon a season men of Tyrhena, came a great meny out of theyr yle vnto Lacedemon, whome the Lacedemonyans suspected to go aboute some subtilitee, and there vpon sette them in holde, and iudged them to dye. Wherfore their wyues gate lycence of the kepers for to go in vnto them, as it were to visete and comfort them: and there chaunged raiment with them, and so they in the womens raymente and their faces couered, as the custome of the countrey was, escaped away, and lefte theyr wyues behynde theym: whome afterwardes with their children together they recouered ageyne, and put all the Lacedemonyans in feare, as Plutarke wryteth.

Moreouer Admetus the kynge of Thessaly, hauyng a disease raynynge vpon hym, whiche coulde neuer be healed without the deathe of an other body, coud fynde none, that wolde gladly dye for his sake, but his wyfe Alceste.

Also many there haue bene, whiche after their housbandes deathe, wolde in no wyse abyde on lyue. Laodamia, after shee had harde tell, that hir housbande Protheſilaus was slayne at Troy of Hector, shee kylde hir selfe. And Paulina, wyfe of Senec, woulde fayne haue dyed with hir housband, and had hir veynes cut, as he had, but she was letted by Nero, and holden a-

gaynst

gaynst hir wyll, tyll hir armes were bounde, and hir bloude stopped: nor she lyued not many yeres after: And while she was aliue, was so pale and so leane with sorowe, that she was a wonder to euery man to loke vpon: and in all the state of hir body shewed manifest tokens of the kynde loue that she had to hir husbande.

¶ The doughter of Democion, the chiefe man of Areopagites, a ponge maid, whan she harde tel of the deathe of hir spouse Leosthenes, she slewe hir selfe, affirmyng, that all though she was vntouched, yet because she was maried vnto hym in mynde, she shulde be an adulterer, if she maried vnto any other after wardes.

¶ Olde wryters of storyes tell, that Halcione wolde not abyde on lyue after the deathe of hir housbande Ceyx: And therfore she lepte downe in to the sea. The fables of poetes, whiche were made to instructe our lyuynges, adde more vnto the tale, that they were changed into byrdes called Alciones: and so well beloued of the goddesse Thetis, that whan so euer these byrdes buylde, there is great calmenes in the sea, and fayre wether in the ayre: and that chaunceth yerely at certeyne tymes. Wherfore those dates be called in laten Halcionii, that is as you wold say, the Halcyon byrdes dayes: and that gyfte they say, the goddis gaue for the gret loue of that woman toward hir husband.

¶ Euadna, whan she kept the funerall of hir husband, she lepte in to the fyre, and folowed hir husband.

¶ Cecinna Petus had a wyfe called Arria, this Cecinna, whan he had ryssen in battayle with Scribonian agaynst Claudius the emperour, and was brought to Rome, Arria desired the souldiours to let hir wayte vpon hir husbande as a seruante: whiche thing whan

they wolde not suffre, she hyred a fisshers bote, and followed the great shippe. And within a fewe daies after the death of hir husband, killed hir selfe at Rome: and yet had she a doughter on lyue, maried vnto Thrasea, the most noble and wysest man in his time.

¶ Porcia doughter of Cato, wyfe vnto Marcus Brutus, whan hir husbande was slaine, she sought for hir owne death. and whan weapons were taken from hir, she thrust hote coles in hir mouthe, and choked hir selfe.

¶ Panthia, wyfe of kynge Sulius kepte hir fayth vnto hir husbande beynge in captiuitee, and spended out all hir goodes for his lyfe: And whan he was slaine in battaile. she dyed voluntarily after hym.

¶ The doughter of Julius Cesar, whiche was maried vnto Pompey the great, whan one brought vpon a tyme home out of the feelde a cote of hir housbandes be bloded, she suspectynge that hir housbande had bee wounded, fell to the grounde in swounynge, and almoste dead: with the whiche a fyghte of hir mynde, shee fell in labour of childe afore hir tyme, and so died.

¶ Also Cornelia, the laste wyfe of the same Pompey, saied: It was shame for a woman, that coulde not dye with only sorowe, whan hir husbande was slaine.

¶ Artheminsia, the queene of Lyde, dyd drynke the asshes of hir husbande, after his death, because for very loue she wolde haue hir owne body to be hir housbandes graue.

¶ These great thynges haue I rehersed, that women, that be nowe adayes, maie be ashamed, whiche will not endeuour theym selfes to perfourme other more easy thynges. Wherfore their crueltee and wickednes is more intollerable, that can fynde in their hertes to see

theyr

their housbandes lye in trouble damage and worldly shame, and all the sorow that can be, for a smal summe of money, whan they haue enough in store to ryd them out of daunger. O herte more harder than any beaste, that canste suffre thy bloud, thy body, and thyne owne selfe on thy housbandes parte, to be so vexed. Doutles the lawes that suffre this iniquitee, haue more regarde of money than feyth or conscience. But this maner hath been lefte vs of the pagans, with many other, whiche abyde more surely in vs, than the lawe of Christe dothe allowe: whiche commaundeth vs to lay forth bothe clothynge, metall, and what treasure so euer we haue in store, not onely the wyfe for hir husbande, but also one christen man for a nother, bee he neuer so vnknowen. wherfore lette the woman vnderstande, that if she wyll not spende all hir substance to saue hir husbande frome neuer so littell harme, she is not worthy to beare that name, neyther of a good, nor christen woman, nor ones to be called a wyfe. Neither I wolde that she shulde loue hir husbande as one loueth his frende, or his brother, that is to saie, I wyl that shee shall geue hym great worshyp, reuerence, great obedyence, and seruice also: whiche thynge not only the example of the olde world teacheth vs, but also all lawes, bothe spirituall and temporall, and Nature hir selfe ectieth and commaundeth, that the woman shal be subiect and obedyent to the man. And in all kyndes of beastes the females obey the males, and waiten vpon theim, and fawne vpon theim, and suffre theim selfe to be corrected of theim: whiche thynge Nature sheweth muste be, and is conuenient to be doone. whiche, as Aristotell in his boke of beastes sheweth, hathe geuen

lesse strength and power vnto the females of all kyndes of beastes, than to the males, and moze soft flesche, and tendze herte.

¶Moze ouer, these partes, whiche nature hath geuen foz weapons of defence vnto beastes, as tethe, hoznes, spozes, and suche other, the moste parte of females lacke, whiche their males haue, as hertes and bozes. And if any females haue any of these, yet be they moze stronger in the males, as hoznes of bulles be moze stronger than of kyne. In all the whiche thynges Nature sheweth, that the males dutie is to succour and defende, and the females to folowe and to wayte vpon the male, and to creepe vnder his ayde, and obeye him, that she maie lyue the better. But lette vs leaue the examples of beastes, whiche make vs ashamed of our selfe, without we passe theim in vertue: and lette vs ascende vp vnto mannes reason.

¶Nowe than, what woman wyll bee so pzesumptuous and so haute, to disobey hir husbandes byddyng, if shee consyder, that he is vnto hir in stede of father and mother and all hir kynne, and that she oweth vnto hym all the loue and charitee that were due to them all? A ragious and a folisshe woman doth not consider this, the whiche is disobedyent vnto hir housbande. Excepte parauenture shee wolde saie, shee oweth none obedyence, neyther to father noz mother, noz to none of hir kynne. Foz if shee obey theim, she must nedes obey hir housbande: in whom by all ryghtes, by al customes, by all statutes and lawes, by all pzeceptes and commaundementes, both natural, wozldly, and heuenly, she ought to accompte all thynge to be.

¶The woman is not rekened the moze wozshipfull

amonge

amonge men, that presumeth to haue maystrye aboue hir housbande: but the more folysshe, and the more woorthy to be mocked: yea and more ouer than that, cursed and vnhappy: the whiche turneth backewarde the lawes of nature, lyke as though a souldiour wolde rule his capitayne, or the mone wolde stande aboue the sonne, or the arme aboue the head. For in wedlocke the man resembleth the reason, and the woman the body. Nowe reason oughte to rule, and the body to obey, if a man wyll lyue. Also sayncte Paule sayth: The head of the woman is the man. 1. Cor. 11.

¶ Here now I entre into the dyuyne commaundementes, whiche in stomackes of reasonable people, oughte of reason to beare more rule and valewe, than lawes, more than all mans reasons, and more than the voyce of nature hir selfe.

¶ God the maker of this holle worlde, in the begynnynge, whan the worlde was yet but rude and newe, gyuynge lawes vnto mankynde, he gaue this charge vnto the woman, Thou shalte be under thyne husbandes rule, and he shall haue dominion ouer the. Gen. 3. 1. Cor. 14.

¶ The apostle Paule, teacher of the Christen wysedome, that is for to say, of the heuenly wysedome, wolde not haue the woman to rule the man, but commaundeth hir in many places to be subiecte. Col. 3.

¶ Peter also, the prynce of the apostles, commaundeth in this wyse: Lette all women be subiecte to their husbandes, as holy women, trustynge in our lorde. Sara was obediente vnto Abraham, and called hym hir lorde. 1. Pet. 3.

¶ Sayncte Hieronyme wryteth vnto Celancia in this wyse: Let the auctorite and rule be reserued vnto thyn husband:

husbande: and be thou an example to all thyne house, what souerayntie they owen vnto hym. Do thou approue hym to be lorde by thyne obedience, and make hym great with thyne humilitee. For the more honour thou gyueste vnto hym, the more honourable thou shalt be thy selfe. For as the Apostle saythe, The head
1.Cor.11. of the woman is the man. Nowe the holle bodye can no where haue more honour, than of the head. this saith saynt Heronyme.

¶ But folyshe women do not se, howe sore they dishonest them selfe, that take ẏ souerayntee of their husbandes: of whom all their honoure muste come: And so in sekynge for honour. they lose it. For if the husbande lacke honour, the wyfe muste nedes goo without it: Neither kynred, ryches, nor welth can auayle her. For who wyll gyue any honour to that man, whome he seeth maystred by a woman? And agayne, if thy husbande be honourable, be thou neuer so lowe of birthe, neuer so poore, neuer so vncomely of face, yet canste thou not lacke honour. For neyther beautee, kynred, nor ryches made Orestilla honourable, after shee was ones maryed to vngracious Catiline: nor pouertie letted not Salonia to be honored of the Romaynes, whiche was wyfe vnto the wyse Cato.

¶ But nowe ẏ thou mayste better obey thy husbande, and do all thynges after his mynde: fyrste thou muste lerne all his maners, and consyder well his disposicions and state. For there be many kyndes of housbandes, and all ought to be loued, honoured, worshipped, & obeyed, but all must not be entreated vnder one maner. For husbandes must be handled, as Terence speketh, after the opinion of Plato, saieng: Mans lyfe is

as it

as it were a game at the tables. For if that chaunce of the dyce chaunce, that is not for them, it must bee amended by crafty playyng. Lyke wise in housbandes, yf thou haue one after thyne appetite, thou maiste bee glad, and he is to be honoured and obeyed: but if he be yll, eyther fynde some crafte to make hym good, or at the least wyse better to deale with.

¶ Howe thy housbande shall be either fortunate or infortunate. Fortunate I call them that haue goodnes either of mynde or of body, or externall: Infortunate I calle those, that lacke any of these three: they that be fortunate, doe easely content theyr wyues myndes: and those that be infortunate, muste haue deliberacion taken about them: Howe be it, I wolde they shoulde rather sette their loue on the housbande hym selfe, than on his fortunes, or els they shall loue both weakely and more vnstedfastly: and if fortune ones flee awaie, as she is wauerynge and inconstant, she carieth awaie the loue together with hir.

¶ Nor let them not loue goodly men for their beautie, nor ryche men for theyr money, nor men of great auctoritee for theyr honoure. For if they do so, than shall they hate the sickely, the poore, and those that beare no rule. If thou haue a lerned husbande, lerne good holy lessons of hym. If he be vertuous, do after hym: but if he be infortunate, call vnto remembraunce the saiynge of Pompeius the great, a verye noble and a wyse man, whiche whan he was ouercomen of Julius Cesar, and came vnto the yle of Lesbo, to receyue his wyfe, and flee awaie with hir, she seyng hir housbande beaten and ouercomen, fell vnto ỹ grounde halfe deade for sorowe, to see hir housbande haue such a fall: whom

Pompeius liftyng vp in his armes frome the grounde, and reuyued agayne, spake vnto hir in this maner: My dere wyfe Cornelia, moste sweete vnto me of all thynges. I wonder of the, so noble a woman, to bee ouer commen in suche manet at the fyrste stroke of Fortune: now thou hast an occasion to opteigne immortall honour. For as for eloquence, or lernyng in the lawe, or feates of warre, are no matters for women to wynne worshippe by: hir vertue shall onely appere, if hir husbande be caste in aduersitee, whom if shee loue and worshyppe, and dothe not lothe his misery, but intreateth hym, as she ought to dooe hir housbande, the worlde shall talke good of hir perpetually. Wherfore it shall be greatter honour to the, to loue Pompeius thus ouer throwen, than whan he was the prynce of all the Romaynes, and gouernoure of the Senate, and lorde of kynges. For as for these thynges euery woman, be she neuer soo vngracyous, can loue well enough, but to fauoure and loue hym that is in aduersitee, there is the poynct of a good woman. Therfore that I am thus ouer commen, thou oughtest to loue, as an occasion to shewe thy goodnes. Wherfore if thou weepe and wayle for any thynge as longe as I lyue, thou shewest thy selfe to loue that, whiche thou lackest and haste loste: and not to mourne for me that am a lyue.

¶ These and suche other woordes he spake vnto his wyfe at that tyme: whiche saiyng, euery good woman shall ponder and consyder in hir mynde, nor vexe hir selfe, if shee chaunce vpon an infortunate husbande: neyther hate nor dispise hym therfore: but rather contrary, she ought, if he be poore, to comfore hym, and

aduertise

aduertise hym to calle vnto remembraunce, that vertue is the chiefe ryches: and helpe hym with suche honest craftes as she knoweth shall please hym: and suche as hir acqueyntance and frendes shall alowe: and as becometh a vertuous and an honest woman. But beware thou fall not in to suche a wycked mynde, to wyll hym for lucre of money to occuppe any vnhonest craftes, or to do any vnhappy dedes, that thou mayste lyue more delicately, or more welthely, or go more gayly and gorgyously arayed, or dwelle in more goodly houslynge: and at fewe wordes, compell not hym to vse any fylthy occupacion or drogery for thy welfare, nor to sweate and to toyle, that thou mayst lye at ease. For it were better for the, toeate browne breadde, and drynke claye and myry water, than cause thy husband to fall vnto any slubbery worke, or stynkynge occupacion, and excedynge labour, for to escape thy scoldynge and chydyng at home. For the husbande is his owne ruler, and his wyues lorde, and not hir subiecte, neither the wyfe ought to craue any more of hir housebande, than shee seeth shee may obtayne with his herte and good wyll: wherein many women do a mysse, whiche with theyr vngoodly cryeng, and vnresonable callynge, craupnge, and dullyng vpon them, driueth them to seke vnlefull meanes of lyuynge, and to do vngracious dedes, to beare out with all theyr glotonye and vayne pride. And some be so out of all good reason, and contrary to all good vertues of theyr husbandes, that they spende out at large theyr substaunce and lyuynge. Whiche vyce is the fouler, bycause that womankinde pretendeth more vertue and deuocion naturally than the mankynde dothe, if that she shoulde for-

gette hir selfe, and caste awaye all holines for the loue of money. And suche wyues be sore rebuked in holye scripture, vnder the persons of the wyues of Job and Thoby: which dyd cast folyshly in their housbandes tethe, that theyr vertues and holy lyuynge was the cause of theyr aduersitee: wherin they shewed greatte wyckednes, and not onely folye, which dyd not beleue, that the ryches of vertue was farre greatter, or that it stode in our lordes power to make mooste ryche and welthye within a moment, who so euer pleased hym.

¶ What nedeth a man any other tyrannes to his martyrdome, than wyues of suche disposicion, whiche pursue theyr housbandes for theyr good deuocion, beynge them selfe without all deuocion, none otherwyse, than Nero pursued the apostles, or Domician, Maximine, Decius, or Dioclecian dyd pursue other chrysten folkes in theyr tyme: And I suppose that this wyfe of Job was lefte hym to make his aduersitie more paynefull, and to oppresse hym the sorer with hir myscheuous tonge. O cursed and wycked woman, that rebukest thy housband for his goodnesse, whiche thynge the deuyll hym selfe dourste neuer do, for he distroyed all the goodes of Job, slewe his seruauntes, rydde vp his childzen out of the worlde, and fylled hym full of galles and scabbes: Yet dyd he neuer rebuke hym for contynuynge styll in his good mynde: but his wyfe rebuked hym therfore: that a man myght se howe muche she was more bolde than the diuyll. But let the wyfe trouble neuer so muche, the housbande ought to be as glad therof, as were the apostles, that they were rekened worthy to be putte to rebuke for the name of our lorde Jesu.

But

¶ But thou good daughter, that wylt dooe well, shalt not withdrawe thyne housband from goodnes, but rather exhorte hym vnto vertue, thoughe thou shuldest be sure to lese all thy goodes. Therefore, that thou mayste obteyne the thynge, whiche sayntPaule speaketh of, sayenge: If the housbande be an infidell, he shall be sanctified by his wyues fayth: Remember also the wordes of our lorde, that there is no bodye that refusethe any thynge in this worlde for Christis sake, but he shall haue muche more for it: bothe in this worlde, and in an other. Fyrst these ryches be sure and certayne, whiche are kepte safe frome all chaunces, neyther wasted within, as metalles be by ruste, and clothynge by moughtes, nor without as stolen by theues. And also the prophet in the psalme sayth: that he hath lerned by longe vse and by good experience, that neuer good man was yet destytute, nor any of his chyldren lacked foode. And we haue as it were an obligacion of our lorde in the gospell, that we shall trust well on his benignitee. And vnderstand, that our father in heuen wyll fynde vs all thynge, that we shall nede, if we seke for his kyngdome, and the iustyce therof.

1. Cor. 7. Mat. 19. Luc. 18.

Psal. 30.

Mat. 6.

¶ Wherfore if thyne housbande be foule, yet loue his hert and mynde, where vnto thou art maryed in dede: And if thyne housband be sycke, than must thou playe the true wyfe, comforte hym, norysshe hym, and make as muche of hym, as thoughe he were neuer so holle and so stronge, and so shall he be the lesse payned if he se the, as it were, take payne with hym: and in a maner translate and shifte parte of his sycknes vnto thy selfe. For she is no good wyfe, that is mery whan her

husbande is sorye: or holle and lusty, whan he is sycke and heuye. Byde thou styll by his beddes syde, and lyghten his doloure some tyme with comfortable wordes, sometyme with gentyll fomentacions. Touche thou his woundes thy selfe, touche thou his sore and paynful body with thyne owne handes. Do thou both couer and vncouer hym thyne owne selfe: take and beare away the chambre vessell with his water thy selfe. Nor abhorre not these seruices: nor put them not vnto thy seruauntes, whiche wyll go more slowly about them, bycause they loue hym not so muche. And whan the pacient perceyueth hym selfe not loued, his sycknes increaseth.

¶ Nowe than shoulde a man calle those wyues good and vertuous women, that be so careles in theyr husbandes syckenes, that they can be well inough content with suche sleight seruices as their seruants do aboute him: And some there be, that wyl nothyng let theyr accustomed stacyons, and feastynges, and bysettynge theyr gossyppes, nor breake any of theyr haunted pleasures, though theyr husbandes lye shutte vp sicke at home: but that is no wedlocke, but rather a poynte of concubynes, or common harlottes, whiche lye with men for theyr wages. Wherfore shulde I be ashamed to name that, whiche the vncracious women shame not to do. For if thou thynke it maketh no force, nor orderthy selfe otherwyse in thyne husbandes sycknes, than if it were but thy neighboure: thou art a foole to loke after, that I shoulde name the for a wyfe, whan thou vseste no wyues gyse. For woldest thou I shoulde name the for a wyfe, whan thou vseste no wyues maners? For shulde I call hym a weauer, that neuer lerned

ned to weaue, nor to drawe the wolfe, nor to caste the shuttyll, nor strycke the webbe with the slaye?

¶ Though that vertue by it selfe can not fayle to come to lyght, and shyneth well enoughe in the darke by the bryghtnes of it selfe, not withstandynge, as muche as lieth in me, I wil not suffre, but that that I haue sene my selfe, and many mo knowe as well as I, I wyll declare, that bothe they that nowe be, and they that shall come hereafter, maie knowe it.

¶ Clare, the wyfe of Barnarde Vauldaure, a fayre and a goodly maide, whan shee was firste maryed at Bruges, and brought to bedde vnto hir husband, whiche was .xlvi. yere of age, the firste nyghte sawe his legges rolled and wrapped with cloutes, and founde that she had chaunced on a sore and a sickely husoande: yet for all that, shee lothed hym neuer the more, nor beganne not to hate hym: whome yet she had no space to loue. Not longe after that, the forsaied Vauldaure fell in to great syckenes, in so muche that all phisicions dispayred his lyfe: than she and hir mother gaue suche diligence vnto the sicke man, that of syx wekes continually together, neyther of theim ones put of their clothes, excepte it were to chaunge their smockes: nor rested in the nyght paste one houre, or three at the moste, and that but in their clothes. The roote of the disease was, that we call the frenche pockes, a wonderous sore and contagious sickenes, phisicions counsailed hir, not to touche hym so, nor come so nere hym: and the same, hir frendes counsailed hir. And hir companions and gossyppes saied: it was synfully doone, to bere the man in the worlde, or kepe hym longer on liue with his sickenes, and bad hir prouide some good thynge for

the

the soule, as for the bodye care no more, but howe it myght be buryed, with whiche saiynge she was neuer a whytte abasshed, but very diligentely procured both suche as was for the welthe of his soule, and prepared holsome meates for his body, and gaue great attendaunce about hym, often chaungynge his shetes, and his cloutes, because he had an excedyng laxe, and matter and fylthe ranne out of dyuers partes of his body: wherwith she was so busyed, that the mooste parte of the daie she neuer rested, but ranne vp and downe all the daye longe. So at the laste by the good meanes of his wife, Ualdaure escaped the great ieoperdye, that bothe the phisicions, and all other men swered, his wyfe had plucked hym from death by stronge hande. And some iested more merily than becommeth christen folkes, and saied, that god had purposed to haue slaine Ualdaure, but his wyfe woulde not let hym go out of hir handes. After that by the reason of an hotte humour rennynge frome his head, the grystle within his nose beganne for to canker: wherfore the phisicions had geuen hym a pouder, whiche muste be blowen in with a penne or a rede in to his nose, whiche seruyce whan euery man abhorred, because of the tedious sauour, his wife refused not to do it. Also within a while his chekes and his chinne brake out of scabbes, wheales, and of skales, that no barbour, neither well coulde nor gladly wolde shaue hym: than his wyfe with a payre of scyssours, founde the meanes to clyppe his berde wonderous proprely. Streight after he fell in to an other longe disease, whiche lasted nere. vii. yere: where she neuer beynge werye, with continuall dilygence and labour about hym prepared his meate, and

euery

euery day dyd salue and bynde his sore and stynkynge legges and rennyng of matter, so hansomly, that thou woldest say, if thou hadst sene hir, that she had handled muske, and not suche stynkynge geare. And dyd all this hir owne selfe with all other busynes, that was for to do about hym: and yet had she in hir howse. iii. maydes, and a daughter of hir owne of good age. Moreouer, whan the ayre of hym and breth was suche, that no man myght abyde nere by .x. passes, she wolde swere, that she thought it marueylous swete: And ones she was very angrye with me, bycause I sayde it stanke, for she sayd, it semed vnto hir lyke the sauour of rype and swete frute. Moreouer, whan there was required great coste daylye in the house, to helpe and norysshe the man oppressed with so many sycknesses, nor had neyther rentes nor other profites commynge in, she spoyled hir selfe of all hir rynges, chaynis, broches, and clothes, leste he shulde lacke ought durynge his sycknes. she was content as for hir selfe with any fare, so that hir housbande might haue that shulde do his paynefull bodye good. So he by the meanes of his wyfe, with that dolefull body, more lyke vnto a corpse than any body, contynued .x. yere from the begynning of his sycknes, in the whiche space she had two chyldren by hym, and .vi. before. For she was maried .xx. yere in the holle: and yet was she neuer infected, nor ones touched with the contagious scabbe, neither she, nor yet none of hir chyldren, but had all their bodyes both holle and clene. Wherby a man may clerely perceyue, howe muche theyr holynes and vertue is worthe that loue their housbandes with all theyr hertes, as dutie is, whiche doubtles god well neuer leaue vnre-

warded. So at the laste this forsayd man dyed sycke and olde, and passed out of his continuall payne. For whose departynge this same Clara his wyfe made suche sorowe, that all that euer knewe hir, saye, they neuer sawe woman make suche sorowe for hir housband, that were bothe yonge, holle, fayre, lusty, and ryche: and whan dyuerse came to hir, not for to comforte hir, but rather to shewe hir, that they were gladde for hir sake, that he was gone, shee abhorred, and in a maner cursed them for theyr laboure, wyshynge many tymes that shee myght haue hym agayne, if it were possible, howe so euer he were. And whā she was of lusty age, after his deth, yet she wold neuer mary, sayeng: she shuld neuer mete with any that she coulde lyke so well. I wyll not reherse here, hir great chastitee and holynes of lyuyng. For I speke but of the loue of a good wyfe, whiche neuer lightly goth alone, but euer coupled, and cōpanied with all other vertues.

¶ Who seeth not nowe, that she dyd not marye Valdaures body, but his herte, or els reckened his body, hir owne body. Beside that shee kepeth styll all commaundementes of hir housbande, as reuerently as he were yet alyue, and dothe many thynges as shee had harde hym speake in his lyfe, saiyng: This mine husbande wolde haue commaunded and bydden dooe. O Euripides, if thou haddest hadde suche a wyfe, thou woldest haue praysed all women as fast as thou haste dispraysed theim. Or if kynge Agamemnon had had suche a queene, she wolde haue tarryed many yeres for his retourning frō the siege of Troy. These examples ought not to be kepte vnshewed, to remembre wyues of their duetye, seynge that lesse matters be put in memorye

memory and writyng.

¶ But these be but of folkes of lowe degree, will some gentle women saie. Firste to make aunswere thereto, Clara Valdaure was not of the loweste degree, and beside that ponge, and tender, and fayre, and had many seruauntes, vnto whom she might haue deputed all hir businesse, if it had pleased hir. And there bee many noble women, that dooe the same, whome I can not reherse all, both nowe a lyue, and that haue ben in tymes past. But this world of ours kepeth in vse only the vices of the olde worldes afore.

¶ Arte thou more noble than the wyfe of Themistocles, whiche was prince of Athenes, and also of Grece: and yet shee serued hir housbande hir selfe alwaye in his syckenes.

¶ Arte thou more noble than Stratonica, wyfe vnto kynge Deiotarus, whiche whan hir housbande was sycke, and an aged man, was bothe his cooke, his phisicion, and his surgian?

¶ Or arte thou more noble than the queene of Englande, whiche sucked hir housbandes wounde? All the noble women of Rome vsed, nor wolde neuer suffre any other, to touche theyr housbandes, whan they were sycke, but theim selfe: whose examples there is none nowe a dayes to good to take hede of. For answere me thou woman, that thynkest thy selfe better than the Romaynes, of whose bloode who so euer was discended, was had in honour throughe all the worlde: Howe be it the very nobilitee is not to be counted by bloode and ryches, the whiche rather standeth in noble actes and vertue: and thou with all thy gentrye shalte lye vnknowen: whan all the worlde perpetually shall talke

Very nobilitee.

of them. Therefore boste not thou thy noble byrthe, whom either none, or els very fewe shall knowe, eyther in thy lyfe or after thy death.

¶ But paraduenture thou woldest saye, I broughte goodes and money enough to make me noble with. O thou fylthy and beastily woman, that weneste thy selfe to be a wyfe, because thou haste a man lyng by thy side, weneste thou that wedlocke standeth in that? Thou breakest the lawes of god and Nature. For if thou woldest touche thyne owne body, beynge diseased, and loke vpon thy sores and handle theim, thou oughtest not to refuse to do the same vnto thyne housbande, seynge that ye be bothe as one person. Therfore where is that same inseparate mate, whiche thou pretendest, if thou sterte from him, whan thou shuldest abyde moste nere? Wherfore vnderstande, that thou doest not thy dutie, neyther to thy brother borne of one woman with the, nor to thy father that begotte the, neyther to thy mother, that bare the. Wherfore if thou be ashamed of that, thou maiest lykewyse be ashamed of that thou doest vnto thy housbande: whom thou oughtest to regarde more than theim all. And many leaue theyr mothers lynge sycke, nor loue any body but them selues, whiche were worthye to be loued of no body els, and no more be they in dede. Howe often haue we sene bestes without reason, ruled only by nature, one cherisshe an other, and the femall lycke the sores of the male, as kyene, and dogges, lyons, beares, and all other bothe wylde and tame? And thou that arte a woman, hauynge reason besyde thy nature, whiche is more excellent than all theirs, canst not fynde in thyne herte eyther to touche or to se thyne housbandes sores, whan thou

thou haste stomacke enoughe to handle the byles, and scabbes of thy concubyne: Wherwith many hath ben taken, that a man maie well knowe, that not nature but their owne vngraciousnes so doth moue them.

¶Nowe to shewe furder of my matter, if the housbande were yll, yet oughtest thou to suffre hym, nor strywe with hym by shrewdnes, leaste thou neuer haue ende of sorowe and myschiefe: but whan he is more pacified, than geue hym warnyng by curteise and gentyll meanes to amende his liuynge. And if he wyll do after thy sayge, than shalte thou profitte bothe hym and thy selfe: but if he begynne to waxe angrye, strywe not with hym, thou hast doone thy dewtie: Therfore let hym alone, and suffer hym, and thou shalte haue not only great commendacion afore men, but also great merite afore god. And if he by vnthriftie meanes of hym selfe moued, and by hastynes stryeke or beate the, thinke it is the correction of god, and that it chaunceth the, as a punishement for thy synnes. And thou shalte be happye, if thou maiest so with a littell payne in this life, bye out the great peynes of an other worlde. Howe be it there bee but verye fewe good and wyse wyues, whom theyr housbandes wyll beate, be they neuer so vnhappye men. Also some husbandes there be, folisshe and wytlesse, whome a good wyfe wyl handle wysely enoughe, and neyther prouoke them to angre, nor take frome theim the honour belongynge to the man: but brynge hym in good hope, that all thynge shalbe doone after his will. And for his profette shalt rule hym well enough by wisedome, as it were a wylde beast tamed, and in all poynctes shalt handle hym in lyke maner, as many mothers dooe their children in like case, whiche

haue moſte compaſſion of theim, that be in moſt miſery: of whiche compaſſion cometh loue and fauour. Wherfore they loue and cheriſſhe more theim that bee feeble, maymed, fooliſſhe, yll fauored, and ſickely, than them that be ſtronge, holle, wyſe, fayre, and luſty.

¶ I wyll not reherſe all other infortunes, I wyll geue a generall precepte of all at ones. If thou be ones maryed vnto hym: and god, the churche, thy father and mother, haue geuen hym to be thy houſbande and thy lorde, thou muſte ſuffer hym, ſeynge thou canſte not chaunge hym, and loue hym, worſhippe and honoure hym: if thou wylte not for his owne ſake, at the leaſte wyſe for their ſakes, that haue geuen hym vnto the: and for the promiſe that thou haſt made him, as many other do loue them that be worthy no loue, only for their frendes ſakes, whiche haue committed theim vnto their truſte. And many do (becauſe of their promiſe) thynges, whiche els they wolde not. Therfore geue thy diligence both to ſeme to do, and to do in dede, that whiche thou muſt nedes do, be thou neuer ſo lothe: and ſo ſhall all thoſe thynges be lyght and pleaſaunt vnto the: whiche if thou be lothe to do, they ſhalbe greuous and painfull.

¶ Nowe I perceyue, that ſome put doubtes, how farre they ought to obey theyr houſbandes, verily in all thynges that be either honeſt, or without vyce, there is no doubte, but a woman ought to obey hir houſbandes commaundement, as a diuine lawe. For the houſbande beareth the roume of god here in erthe vnto his wife, and preſenteth his perſone: Therfore if there be any thynge, that the wyfe wolde geue vnto god, ſhe neyther ought nor maie do it without hir houſbandes lycence.

cence. For what maie a woman recken to bee more hir owne, than her body and mynde? And yet sayth saynt Paule, that the woman hath no power of hir owne body, neyther she can not auowe chastitee vnto god, hir housbande either not wyllyng, or not knowyng. Wherfore if thyne housbande wolde haue the otherwise occupied, thou mayst not only not go forth to daunce or see playes, or go to feastes, and passe tyme with gossyppes, whiche be poynctes of common harlottes, but thou mayst not as muche as go pray or walke aboute to churches, without his leaue: or elles be thou sure, that neither thy prayer is pleasaunt vnto god, nor thou shalt not fynde god in the churche. God wolde that thou pray, and go to the churche, but that is whan thou hast done thyne housbandes busynes at home, and he hath none other labour to sette the about. And these be the poynctes of wedlocke, whiche god lyketh best in a maryed woman. For in his gospell he byddeth a man be at one with his frende, er he come nere his aulter: howe muche more than wolde he haue the to be at one with thyne housbande, whiche farre passeth any frende? Wherto goest thou to masse or churches, whan thyne housbande commaundeth otherwyse, eyther by wordes expressedly, or by countynãce priuely? Wenest thou to fynde god in the churche, whan thou leuest thyne housebande at home eyther sycke or hungry? Thou mayst fynde all hallowes aboute his bedde, bothe aulters, god, peace, concorde, and charitee, and specyally where the man and wyfe be coupled with these thinges. Thou shalt soone make god thy frende, if thou make thyne housbande thy frende afore. God nedeth not muche of our seruice. But vertuous lyuynge and high

1. Cor. 7.

Matt. 5.

honour

honour, them he reserueth vnto hym selfe, other thynges to be kept in the worlde, as loue and concorde. And that is the cause why he reherseth so ofte charitee in his gospell, and saith, he geueth his kyngdome vnto those that haue vsed charitee vnto folkes in this worlde: and casteth out from the inheritaunce of heuen, that hath ben enuious and malicious ageinst their euen christen. For thou shalte easely make god thy frende, if thou reconcile thyne euen Christen vnto the before. Neyther there is any waie more redye vnto goddes fauour, than fyrste to opteine fauour of thyne euen Christen. Therfore lette a woman thinke that she dothe a great sacrifice, whan she serueth hir housbande, and thynke that she visetteth churches deuoutly, if she be diligente about hir housbandes bedde.

¶ But there be some women, that if their housbande were neuer so sycke, yet wolde they neuer lette theyr walkinge of their stacions to churches about, and that more for their pleasure, than deuocion to god warde. But where to shulde we talke of them? Saynt Paule writyng vnto Tymothe speaketh of womans duetie in this wyse: Let the woman lerne with all obedience, kepynge scilence. For I wyll not haue the woman to be a teacher, nor to rule hir housbande, but to kepe silence. Also writynge vnto the Corinthians he saith. Lette not your women speake in the churche, but if they lyste to learne oughte, that they bee in doubte of, aske theyr housebandes at home.

1. Tim. 2.

1. Cor. 14.

¶ Whiche lawe in myne opinion meaneth none other thinge, but that the woman ought to lerne of hir housband, and in such thynges as she standeth in doubt of, to folowe his mynde, and beleue as he doth: and if the hous-

husbande do wronge, hym selfe shal beare al the blame, the wyfe shalbe out of faute: except it be so manifest, that she maie perceiue the faute hir self playnly enough, or els be taught otherwyse of suche as the housbande hym self myght well enough lerne.

¶ For those thynges that be agaynst the lawes of god she ought not to do, though hir husbande commaunde hir neuer so muche. For she muste aknowlage one for better than hir husbande, and haue more in price, that is Christe. The man is head of the woman, but Christe is head of the man. 1. Cor. 11.

¶ Many holy women of our fayth haue been sore punished of their housbandes, for folowynge Christes preceptes agaynst their will. And yet the apostle Paule commaundeth the wyfe, not to departe from hir housbande without his leaue, be he neuer so vngracious. So great be the bondes of wedlocke, that the Christen myghte not departe frome the hethen without leaue. 1. Cor. 7.

What than ought we to suppose, where both be Christned, and bothe good? Aristotel saieth: A good woman ought to take the maners of hir housbande, as a lawe and rule of hir liuynge, geuen hir by god by the couplyng of matrimony. And it becommeth hir to accorde with hir housbande, and serue hym, not onely in prosperitee, but also in aduersitee. If he lack goodes, or be sycke of his body, or out of his minde, let hir suffre and obey hym, excepte it be some vnclenly thynge, or vncommely. Nor let hir not beare longe in mynde if hir housband offend hir, by reason of distresse of his minde: but laye the cause in his disease and ignorance. For the more paciently she vseth him in these poynctes, the more thanke shall he geue hir, whan he is amended. And if

there be any vncomely thyng commaunded hir by hym, whiche she hath not doone, he shall consydre that better after his amendyng. Wherfore a woman ought to abstayne from yll, but in all good thynges, to obeye none otherwyse than thoughe she had been bought in to the house as a bonde and hande mayde. And in dede she is boughte with a great price, that is to saie felowship of lyfe, and procreacion of childzen: than whiche, nothyng can be greatter nor holyer. Moreouer if she had had a welthy housbande, than coulde not hir goodnes ben so muche knowen. For it is but a smalle acte to handle prosperitee well. Howe be it to suffre aduersitee patiently is counted a great thynge. For in great aduersities and harmes not to be in extreme dispayre, is a poynete of a noble stomacke. Therfore she had nede to prape, that no harme bechaunce hir husband. But if any aduersitee fall, than let hir consydre, that she shal wynne great worshyp therby, if she behaue hir selfe wel. And let hir remembre, that neither quene Alceste shuld haue had so great honour, nor quene Penelope so great preise, if thei had liued in prosperitee with their housbandes. For the aduersitee of kynge Admetus and Ulysses, caused them to wynne eternall memory. For in thaduersities of the housbandes they opteigned, and that well worthye, eternall glorye, for keppynge faythe and truthe towarde their housbandes. For women wyll take no parte of aduersitee, excepte it be suche as be wonderous good. Wherfore to conclude, it becometh the wife, to haue hir housbande in honoure, and not dispice hym. These be Aristotles wordes.

Of

Of the concorde of maried couples. The .v. Chapter.

HIt were an infinite thyng, nor the tale shuld come vnto any ende, to reherse the goodnes of Concord: and howe all thynge in the worlde, and also the worlde it selfe, standeth together by vnytee and concorde: but out purpose is to speake of wedlocke: in whiche I say, the greatteste quietnes and mooste parte of pleasure, is Concorde: and the greatteste trouble, and most parte of misery in it, is Discorde. Concorde. Discorde.

They that were of Pythagoras disciplyne, amonge all the preceptes of Pythagoras, they kept these rules, and mooste, and oftest vsed them, That languishe shuld be voyded and put from the body, foly and Lewdnes from the mynde, Ryotte from the bealye, Sedicion out of the citee, Discorde out of the house, and finally Intemperaunce out of all thinges.

Vlysses in Homer, wysheth for an housebande, a house, and concorde vnto Nausicaa, the doughter of kynge Alcynous: whiche is the greatteste treasure and most to be desired that can be. For whan the wyfe and housbande lyue peasably together, they cause much sorowe vnto their ennemyes, muche ioy vnto their frendes, and most of al vnto them selues. Thus he sayd.

How happy a mariage suppose we ỳ Albutius had, whiche lyued with his wyfe Terentiana, without any displeasure. xxv. yere? And yet more fortunate was Publius Celer, that lyued with Ennia, his wyfe. xliii. yere without any grutching or complainte. For of Discorde commeth debate, braulynge, chydynge, and fyghtyng. And women be ful of whynynge for the most parte, and yll to intreate: and ofte tymes whan they haue chiden

their housbandes for a lyght matter, it cometh at last vnto great disturbance.

¶ For there is nothynge, that so soone casteth the mynde of the husbande from his wyfe, as dooeth much scoldynge, and chidynge, and hir myscheuous tonge whiche Salomon lykeneth vnto a droppyng and raynynge house rofe in the wynter, because that both driueth the man forthe at the dooze. And the forsaied Salomon saieth, that it is better to dwelle in a desarte and desolate countrey, than in house with a chydynge and an angry wyfe. And a fewe whiche be intollerable, geue this benefitte vnto the holle kynde, that none semeth good to deale with all: and hereof cometh this saiyng: who so hath no strife, hath no wife, as who saieth, he that hath a wyfe, hath stryfe. And that thyng causeth many, that be quietly disposed, neuer to mary. And therfore many thynges were writen in olde tyme in the rebuke of womankynde, and diuorses sought out, and sharpely executed. And nowe amonge chrysten men those thynges be sore myssed of many, and desyred after. For they saye their wiues wolde be better, if they knewe they myght be put awaie, excepte they were gentyll.

¶ In whiche opinion after my mynde, either the men be disceyued, or the women be starke fooles: whiche do not consydre, that they had nede to be the more obedient vnto theyr housbandes, that they myght lyue the more merily with theim, from whom they can by no meanes be departed: lest they turne perpetuall necessitee in to mesery, whiche they can neuer do awaie. For it resteth muche in the wyues handes, to kepe rest and quietnes in the house. For the man is not so ryckull as the woman.

man. And that is not in mankynde only, but also in all kyndes of beastes, as Aristotle saieth. For the males, because they haue more bolde stomackes, and are more lusty of courage, therfore be they more symple and lesse noysome, for they haue the more noble myndes. And the females contrary be more malicious, and more set to dooe harme. Wherfore the women wyll be taken with light suspiciousnes, and ofte complayne and vexe theyr housbandes, and angre them with peuysshe puelynge: but the man is easier to reconcile than the woman: Lyke as of men, he that is most lyke stomacke vnto a woman, nor is not of lusty courage: wyll remembre iniury longest, and seke for vengeance the most violently, nor can be content with a meane reuengeance.

¶ There was in olde tyme in Rome a chapell of a certayne goddesse, in whiche if any disturbance had been betwene the husbande and the wife at home, they spake certain wordes, what thei list, and were agreed againe. And this goddesse was named Viriplaca, that is to saie, please husbande. Which name sheweth, that the husbande ought not to study to please ỹ wife, but ỹ wife to please hir husbande. And though the more parte of these thinges that I haue spokē, perteigne vnto Concord, yet wil I bryng some thynges more nere vnto that purpose.

¶ One the moste chiefe and especiall helpe vnto concorde is, if the wyfe loue hir husbande. For this is the nature of loue, to get loue agayne. Nor let not some wonder so muche as they dooe, whye their housbandes loue theim not, seynge they loue not theim, but loke wel lest they loue not theyr housbandes so muche as they make semblaunce. Let them loue their housbandes in dede, and they shalbe loued of them agayne. For famed Nature of loue.

and counterfette loue bothe sheweth it selfe nowe and than, and hath not the verave strength and vertue that the faythfull loue hath.

¶ Moze ouer, if the wyfe and husbande loue together, they shal bothe wyll and nylle one thynge, which is the very and true loue, For there can neuer be discorde noz debate betwene those, in whome is one herte, not desyrynge contrary thyng. And one minde, not of contrary opinion.

¶ My mother Blaunch, whan she had ben.xv.yere maryed vnto my father, I coude neuer se hir stryue with my father. There were ii. saienges, that she had euer in hir mouth, as prouerbes. Whan she wolde say she beleued wel any thing, than she vsed to say, euen as though Lodowyke Viues had spoken it. Whan she wolde say ỹ she wold any thing, she vsed to say, euen as though Lodowik Viues wold it. I haue hard my father say many times, but specially ones, whan one told him of a saieng of Scipio Africane the yonger, oz els of Pomponius Atticus, & I wene it were the sayeng of thẽ both, ỹ they neuer made agreement with their mothers, noz I with my wyfe sayde he, whiche is a greatter thynge. Whan other, that harde this sayeng, wondzed vpon it, and the concozde of Vyues and Blaunche was taken vp and vsed in a maner foz a prouerbe, he was wonte to answere lyke as Scipio was, whiche sayd, he neuer made a greement with his mother, bycause he neuer made debate with her, but it is not to be muche talked in a boke made foz an other pourpose, of my vertuous mother: whome I doubt not nowe to haue in heuen the frute and rewarde of hir holy and pure liuyng. Moze ouer, because I haue purposed to make a seuerall boke

of

of hir actes and hir lyfe.

¶ And many women that loue indiſcretely, breake concorde at ones. Therfore muſte their diſcrecion be holpen forthe with ſome teachyng, and their fierſenes abated. And that with this one thynge, if they ſtaye theyr mynde and fantaſyes, whiche ſone carieth the feebyll reſon of women awaie with theim. Therfore a woman ſhulde haue great demurenes and ſobrenes in hir mynde, and ſhewe it with hir dedes. And often I warne hir, that ſhe do nothynge for to ſeme, and for a countenance: For that is a thyng of ſmall value or none. But as ſhe wolde ſeme to be, ſuch let hir be in dede, and than ſhall ſhe the more truely appere. Let hir wene neuer to diſceyue any body by clokynge and diſſimulacion. For men be not ſuche ſtockes nor ſtones, but that thei can knowe a counterfete thyng frome a thyng in dede. And thoughe they diſceyue folkes that loke vpon theim, yet can they not diſceyue nature, whiche hathe not geuen like vertue vnto thinges counterfeted as trew in dede. Let them make proffe in them ſelfe. Let them conſider, whether they thinke theim honeſt and ſad, that make countenance of honeſtie, hauyng none at al, or not: and whether they loue agayne ſuch as make ſemblance, as though they loued them, and do not in dede.

¶ It were good for a wyfe to vſe that counſayle, that Horace the wyſe poet geueth vnto Lollius, how to vſe his frende, byddyng hym applye hym ſelfe vnto his frendes appetyte. If he lyſt to hunte ſaieth he, do thou not ſytte to make verſes, but caſte vp thy muſes, and folowe the herſes caryng the nettes, and leade forthe dogges.

¶ Amphion and Zetus were brethern and twynnes borne

borne of Anthiopia, the one was verye cunnynge in harpyng, thother rude and vnlerned. Nowe whan the ſounde of the harpe pleaſed not Zetus, and lyke to departe company betwyxte the two bretherne, Amphion therfore layde downe his harpe. And ſo let the wyke ordre hir ſelf after hir huſbandes maners and pleaſure, leſt he hate and ſet nought by hir.

¶ We rede in hiſtories, that Andromacha, Hectors wife, gaue haye and otes vnto his horſes with hir owne handes, becauſe ſhe ſawe what delyte hir houſbande had in theim, and kept theim for warre as diligently as coulde be.

¶ And Cecilius Plinius ſheweth in many piſtelles, that he loued his wyke moſt derely, in whiche piſtolles, there is one writen vnto Hiſpula, his wiues awnt, whiche had brought hir vp, where he geueth hir great thankes, that ſhe ſo taught hir and brought vp, whan ſhe was a chylde: and alſo ſhewed the cauſe why he loued his wife ſo well, writyng of his wife in this wiſe.

Plinius ¶ She loueth me, whiche is a ſygne of chaſtitee. And more ouer ſhe is greatly geuen vnto lernyng, whiche fantaſy ſhe hath taken by the loue ſhe hath vnto me. She hath my bokes, and redeth, and lerneth theim without boke: and whan ſo euer I ſhal pleade, ſhe is wonders carefull: and whan I haue done, marueylous ioyfull. She ſetteth folkes to watche, howe I am lyked of the people, what countenaunce, what noyſe I cauſe them to make, what iudgement I get in the ende. And whan ſo euer I reherſe a lectoure, ſhe getteth hir nerte vnto me, ſeperate fromc the other herers with a vayle, and herkeneth moſte diligently for my prayſes. She ſingeth my verſes, and playeth theim on the lute. None

other

ether mnister teacheth hir, but the loue shee hathe vnto me, whiche is the best schole maister of all. Thus wryteth Plinius.

I late, whan I was at Paris, and talked with Guilielmus Budeus at his owne house, and his wife come bye, where as we walked, a goodly persone and a fayre, as a man shulde loke vpon, whiche as I could deme by hir comely maner and countenance, me thought shuld be bothe a prudent and vertuous huswyfe. So she, after she had saluted hir housoande, with suche reuerence as a good woman shulde, and had welcomed me curtesly and honourably, I asked hym, if she were his wife: yes forsothe saieth he, this is my wyfe, whiche so diligently foloweth my pleasure, that shee intreateth my bookes no worse than hir owne chyldren, because she seeth me loue studye so well. In whiche thyng me thynke hir worthye more preyse than was Plinius wyfe: in as muche as shee was lerned hir selfe, and this is not.

Nowe howe muche more honestly doth she, than suche as drawe their housbandes from study, and counsayle theim to luker, playe, or other pleasures, that they maie optayne parte them selfe, eyther of luker, playe, or volupties, because they can get no parte of theyr study. And the fooles knowe not, howe muche more sure and verraye pleasure it were, to haue a wyse man than a riche or voluptuous. Moreouer they shulde lyue a great deale more quietlye with wyse men, than with ignorant fooles, that neuer had set the bridell of reason to rule theyr fantasyes withall, whiche be for the more part caried quite awaie with suche motions as come in theyr myndes. Nor she shulde lothe in hir husbande neyther

ſtudy or any thing els, either by wordes, countenaunce, or geſture, or any maner of ſygnes, ſhee ſhall loue all thynge in hym, haue all thynge in reuerence, and ſet great store by it, what ſo euer he dothe, aſſent all thyng vnto hym, and beleue what ſo euer he ſaieth, though he tolde that neyther were true, nor lyke to be, nor preſume aboue hir housbande in any maner thynge, ſhall recken hym hir father, hir lorde, hir elder, hir better. This ſhall ſhe both knowlage in dede, and make ſemblaunce of. For howe can any loue or frendſhyp ſtande, if thou beyng ryche, diſpyſe hym poore: or fayre thy ſelfe, loth hym beyng foule: or thy ſelf of great bloode, diſdeigne hym as of lowe byrthe? Iuuenall ſaieth, There is nothyng more intollerable than a ryche wyfe. Saynt ieronyme ſaieth the ſame, writyng agaynſt Ioupiane. And Theophraſt ſaieth, It is a tourment to ſuffre a ryche wyfe. But I can not beleue that, excepte they ſaie, if ſhe be yll and lewde with all. For what a lewdnes is it, not to conſyder howe vayne a thyng money is? For it is the vyleſt of all thynge that men be proude of. But many lyght and fraple myndes wyll ryſe a lofte with a litteil wynde. Ah foole, dooeth not wedlocke make all thynge common? For if that frendſhippe make all thyng common, howe muche more dothe maryage make common not only their money, but alſo frendes, kynſefolkes, and all thynge elles? Wherfore the Romaynes (as Plutarche ſaieth) commaunded in theyr lawes, that the housbande and wife ſhulde geue nothyng one vnto an other, becauſe that neyther ſhulde recken any thyng priuatly theyr owne. In a good common wele Plato ſaieth, that theſe wordes, Myne and thyne, ſhulde be put awaie. Than muche more in a good houſe holde, whi-

Iuuenall.

Theophraſt.

che

che is than the best, and most perfet, therto moste welthfull, whan there is as one body vnder one head. For if it haue many heddes or many bodies, it is lyke a monster. More ouer, all is the husbandes, and after the similitude of Plutarche, thoughe there be more water than wyne in the cuppe, yet is all the myxture called wyne, so though the woman bryng neuer so much with hir, and the man neuer so littell, yet all is his. For he muste nedes haue all that the woman hath, that hath hir selfe and is hir lorde. And thou maiest here our lord saie to the: woman, thou shalt be in the rule of thy husband: and he shall haue the maistrie on the. Nor he is to bee dispised for his fauoure. For thou hast fauoure, and he hath the with thy fauour. Gen. 3.

¶ I will not dispute, howe sklender a thyng beautie is, whiche standeth but onely in mennes opinions. For thee that is fayre in one mans sight, is foule in an others. howe fraple, and vnto howe many ieoperdyes indangered, howe sletynge, and howe vnstable a thyng is beautie. whan one agewe, one wart, or one here maie of the moste goodly make the moste lothsome? And in men, no body desyreth suche grace of fayrnes: but they thynke it in a woman very comly, and yet shalte thou rede in the wyse kynges saiyng: Fauour is a disceptfull thynge, and beautie is vayne. But the woman that dredeth god, she shalbe preysed. Fynally, seyng that ye be one flesshe, or rather one persone, bothe thou and thy housbande, than can he neuer be foule that hathe a fayre wyfe. And if thou wylt not suppose neyther the wife nor the husbande to be fayre, Vertue alone is bothe beautie and noblenes. Beautie. Pſal. 31. Vertue. Noblenes.

¶ I will let passe here, howe foolysshe a thynge it is,

that they call noblenes. Whose opinion and estimacion standeth in the comen voice of people, which is maister of all errours. But be thou neuer so noble, if thou marye to one vnnoble, thou arte made vnnobler than he: nor the wife can not be more noble than hir husbande. For that thing can not be alowed in no kind of beastes. The chyldren haue the name of the father throwe all the world, as of the better: and than if thou be very noble, eyther must he be made very noble, or thou vnnoble. And in the Ciuile lawe the women haue theyr dygnitee of theyr housbandes, and not of their fathers, in so muche that those that were commyn of moste noble father, if they maryed vnto one of lowe degree, they were not called noble. And that appered well in the noble women of Rome, whiche droue out of the chapell of chastitee, that was ordayned for noble women, one Virginia, commen of noble parentes, because she was maryed vnto a man of lowe byrth: and therfore they saied, she was none of theim, but of the common rate of people: neyther she denyed that, nor was asshamed to be taken for one of the lowe people, nor dispised the common people in comparison of the nobles, nor abasshed to be called Virginia Volumnius wife.

¶Also Cornelia, doughter vnto Scipio, whan shee was maryed vnto an house, whiche was in dede great and famous, and honorable: howe be it, nothynge able to be compared with hir fathers, beyng hir selfe of the best bloode in Rome, and one the moste chiefe of that blood, doughter of Scipio, whiche was the conquerour of Affrike, the prince of the Senate, and al the people of Rome, and also of all the worlde moste excellent, thoughe she had to hir mother Emilia, comen

of

of the bloode of the Emilians, the moste honourable and famous, bothe in Rome, and all the worlde: yet she haupnge so great honoure, bothe of fathers syde & of mothers, had leauer euer be called, Cornelia Gracchi, by hir housbandes name, than Cornelia Scipionis. Wherfore some were discontent, whiche for honour vsed to call hir Cornelia Scipionis, by hir fathers name.

¶ Thelia, syster vnto the elder Dionysius the tyran of Syracuse, was maried to one Philoxenus, whiche whan he had gone about to do a displeasure vnto Dionisius, and was spied and constreigned to fle out of Sicille, this Thelia his wife was sent for by the kyng hir brother, and rebuked of hym, because she dyd not discouer hir husbandes flyght vnto hym. why (said she) weneste thou that I were so vile and abiect, that if I had knowen of his goyng, I wold not a gone with al, and folowed him, & ben rather the wife of Philoxenus the outlawe in any place in the world, than kyng Dionisius sister here at home in my countrey? And al the Siracusians had in great reuerence this gaye & vertuous minde of hirs. And whan the tyrans were banisshed, they both worshipped hir in hir life, and honored after hir deathe.

¶ Mary the wyfe of Maximilian the emperour, whiche had by hir father of inheritaunce all Flanders and Picardye, and the people set nought by the simple and soft disposicion of Maximilian, and sewed for all their matters vnto Mary his wyfe, yet wolde she neuer determyne any thynge without hir housbandes aduyse, whose wyll she reckened euer for a lawe, though shee myght wel enough haue ruled & ordened al as she lyst, with his good wyll: whiche vsed to suffer of his mylde stomacke any thynge that she lyst, vnto his good and

pzudent wyfe, and that is hir owne goodes. So Mary by obeiyng hir housbande, and regardyng hym so wel, brough hym in to great auctozite, and made the people moze obedient vnto them both, as though their powers were increased and aided either by other. And these duties be in the mynde.

Bzidlyng of the tonge.

Now we muste we bzydel the tonge, which if the mynde be wel bzideled, it shal rule it wel enough. Foz the cause why many women be ratle of tonge, is because they can not rule their mindes. Foz ire occupieth them hole, and plucketh out of frame, noz suffereth any parte of them to rule it selfe: and therfoze haue they neyther measure noz reason in their chidynge and scoldynge. Foz they be put besyde all reason and discrecion, whan the fyze hath catched all to gether and made his owne, whiche soone increaseth in softe tymber and apte foz fyze, whereof cometh rageyng, bothe of stomacke and tong with out measure. Whiche I haue ofte wondzed on, and that in very good and honest women, in whome, sauynge this one byce, there lacketh neither chastitee noz goodnes, manyfolde and great vertues. Yet haue I missed in theim moderacion and temperaunce of ire and language: in so muche that I haue been asshamed of it, thoughe none of it hath perteyned to me, but bene amonge those that haue been very strangers to me, at lest if one Chzisten body ought to be a strangervnto an other. Therfoze as it is a harde vertue foz a woman to temper hir tonge, so verily it is the most goodly vertue that can belonge to any. Whiche thyng she shal easyly do, if she abyde in hir owne power, noz suffre hir selfe to be caried awaie with hir owne fantasies, as it were

with

with stormes of wether. And this lette hir ofte call to mynde specially, and purpose whyle shee is safe and in hir owne power, that if she chaunce to falle at wordes with hir housbande, she rebuke not nor dispraise either his kynne, or persone, or condicions, or his lyfe, whiche thyng she woteth shulde greue his stomacke. For if he be angred with suche a thynge, he wyll bothe be worse to reconcyle, and after that he is agreed agayne, yet as oft as that worde cometh vnto his remembraunce, he wyll neuer loke merily on hir, beside the displeasure that it is to god. For our lorde saieth in the gospell of Matthew: Who so saieth vnto his brother Racha, that is to saye, braynles, shall be accusable vnto the counsayle: and he that saieth foole, shall be dampnable vnto the pyt of fyre. Nowe than consyder what thou shalte haue, that makest that great raylyng, not onely on thy brother, but also thy father, and as much as lieth in the, on the deputie of god and all thy kyn. And if thy housbande laye any suche thyng vnto thy charge, be wyse, that it abyde not in thy remembraunce, but suffre it pacientlly: and whan he is comen vnto hym selfe agayne, thou shalte optayne great thanke of hym for thy sufferaunce, and shalt tourne his furious minde vnto good: and shalte haue hym the more gentyll afterwarde, and easyer to deale with. Mat. 5

Terence, whose pourpose was none other, but to expresse the condicions of the worlde in his comedyes, writeth of a chast and honest yong woman in this wise: She, as becometh an honest woman, shamefast, sad, and demure, suffered all the iniuries and fautes of hir husbande, and kept close the displeasures. And for these causes, the housbandes mynde tourned agayne vnto

his

his wyfe, frome whose loue he abhorred. And that was the counsayle of the wyse nource in Seneke the poet, whiche shee gaue vnto Octauia the wyfe of Nero, saiynge: Vanquisshe thy cruell housbande rather with obedyence.

¶ Nor let not a woman cast in hir housbandes tethe any benifitte dooen vnto hym by hir, whiche is an vnsittynge and displeasaunt thynge, yea amonge those that be nothynge of kynne together: and he that casteth his benefite in an other mannes tethe, loseth his thanke that he shulde haue had. For he hath strycken it out of the others herte.

¶ Moreouer if thou consider wel, there can be no benefite doone by the to thyne housbande, to whom thou art bounden as muche, as vnto thy father or thy selfe other. For any good woman wyll make muche reherfall of hir kynred, or goodes, whiche thyng wil lyghtly wery hir housbande, beyng neuer so louyng. The poet Iuuenall saieth, that he had leauer haue a poore woman, and of lowe birth, than Cornelia the doughter of Scipio Affrican (of whose vertues we haue spoken here before) if she be proude and stately of hir fathers noblenes: For he saieth in this wyse:

I had leauer haue a poore Venusyne
Than the, Cornelia mother vnto Gracchis,
If thou bryng with thy vertues fyue
Proude lokes, and reken vp triumphis.
Awaie with Annibal I prate the, in armis
Ouercomen, and Syphax vanquisshed
And with bolle Carthage all together flyted.

¶ The sage man Plutarche commaundeth, that in the beginnynge of maryage all occasions of debate shulde

shulde be eschewed, whan the loue is yet not well knitte together, and is yet tendre and weake, and easy to breake with any littell cause, as a vessell newe made will a sundre with a small knocke. Nor let hir not chide a bed. For where shoulde they laie awaie theyr displeasure, if they make that place troublesome, and comberous with scoldyng, whiche is moste meete for loue and concorde, and as it were, corrupteth the medicine, that the disease of the mynde shoulde be holpen with?

¶ Howe she shulde lyue betwene hir husbande and hir selfe priuately. The. vi. Chapter.

IT were not vnmete for this place, to reherse, howe she ought to behaue hir in priuitee and secreatly vnto hir husbande, betwene him and hir.

¶ Fyrst let hir vnderstand, that thei that were wont to make sacrifice vnto Juno, whome they called the ruler and ouerseer of wedlocke, neuer offred the gall in sacrifyce that they made, but toke it out of the beaste, and caste it awaie behynde the aulter, syngnifiyng that there oughte to bee neyther displeasure, nor any bytternes amonge maryed couples. Also they were wonte to couple Uenus and Mercury together in maryage, as a pleasure and myrthe. For the wyfe shoulde couple and bynde hir husbande vnto hir euery daie more and more, with hir pleasant and gentyll condicions. For nothyng dothe more drawe and entice vnto it, than doth pleasant condicions and swete speche. A wise woman shuld haue in mynde merye tales, and histories (how be it yet honest) wherwith she maie refreshe hir husband, and make hym merye, whan he is wery. And also she shall learne preceptes of wysedome, to exhorte him vnto vertue, or drawe

hym from vice with al, and some sage sentences agayn̄ the assautes and rages of both fortunes, both to plucke downe hir housbandes stomacke, if he be proude of prosperitee and welth: and to comfort and corage hym, if he be stryken in heuynes with aduersatee. So Placidia daughter vnto Theodosius, the emperoure, whan hir housbande Athaulpus the kynge of the Gothians, was in purpose vtterly to distroy Rome, and the name of Romanes, with hir swete eloquence and pleasaunt behauour, brought hym out of that vngracious purpose, and saued hir countrey.

¶ And agayn the wife shal make hir husbande a counsayle of all hir sorowes and cares: so that they be mete to tell a wyse man of. She shall take hym onely for hir companyon and talkyng felowe, counsellour, maister, and lorde, and vtter vnto hym all hir thoughtes, and rest in him. For these thynges make loue and concorde. For lightly we loue them, whom we tell our counsayle vnto, and as it were vnlade vs of our thoughtes, and in whom we trust muche. And lyghtly folkes loue theim agayne, of whome they recken theym selfe loued and trusted.

¶ A wyse woman shall as muche as she maie, serche diligently, whether hir housbande haue any yll suspection in hir, whether there be any sparkes of anger, or hate, or any remnantes or tokens of theim lefte in his mynde: if there be any suche thynge, lette hir labour to get it out er it growe greatter. For these thynges increase lyghtly with a littell cause. Let hir therfore get this out of hir housbandes mynde by gentyll meanes, and contente hym agayne. For vnknowen sykenesses increase and distroye the body soner, than those

those that appere. Lette hir not strywe to plucke it out, nor handle it harde, lest she fasten it the more sure in, whan she mate better auoyde it without any peine, that is to saie, without complaynt, and without grudgyng. Nor let hir not thynke, that eyther god or man is content with hir, whyle hir housoande is displeased with hir. Our lorde saieth in the gospell: If thou come to doode thine offryng at the alter, and there remembre that any displeasure is yet remaynynge betwene thy brother and the, laie downe thyne offrynge there, and go be agreed firste with thy brother, and after offer that vnto god, that thou intendest. For thou callest for peace of god in vayne, as longe as thy frende is not pleased with the, but muche more if thy housbande be not. Matt. 5.

¶ What so euer is spoken in the chambre and the holy bed of wedlocke, let hir take good hede, to kepe more secrete and close, than the sacrifice of Ceres in Elewce was kept, or misteries of any other god or goddes. For what madnes is it to bable out such thynges, as ought to be kepte so secrete? The wyse people of Athens, whan they had warre with Philip, kyng of Macedony, and had taken letters of his, sente vnto his wyfe Olempias, they wolde not suffre theim to be opened and red, because they reckened the secretes of wedlocke to be, as they be in dede, holy, and to be kept in priuitee, nor to be conuenient to commyne theim abrode, or to be knowen of other folkes, than of the wyfe and hir housbande. And therfore they sente the letters vntouched vnto Macedone, vnto the quene. Wherfore they were worthy to haue their wyues bothe to keepe faythe and counsayle with theim. Nowe if they dyd that vnto their enemye armed agaynst theim, howe muche more

is it for the to do it vnto thy housebande. Porcia wyfe vnto Brutus proued hir owne patience with a wounde, whether she coulde kepe counsayle of great matters or not. And whan she sawe she coulde hyde the wounde and keepe it secrete, than was she so bolde as to aske of hir housbande, what he studied so carefully vpon: And whan he had tolde hir howe they purposed to slea Cesar, shee kepte hir as well as any that was of the same counsayle.

¶ Neyther the wyfe ought only to loue hir husbande hir selfe, but also to se, that she make not other folkes to hate hym, or bringe hym into any ieoperdy, by causynge hym to be enuied throughe hir meanes. Nor let not hir vse hir housbande to be hir page, and reuenge all iniuries doone vnto hir, except it be the parel of chastitee, whiche is the moste precious thynge that a woman can haue.

¶ If any body haue spoken woordes of displeasure or dishonestie vnto hir, or done a thynge that maie seme to greue hir tendre mynde, let hir not renne streyght to hir housbande, and kindell his stomacke with fyre woordes, suche as angre is wonte to cause. A good woman shall take all suche thynges pacientlp, and shall reken hir selfe safe and sure enoughe, as longe as hir chastitee is holl and vntouched: which if it be polluted, there is nothyng to be reckered pure.

¶ She shall vse in chaumbre not onely chaste behauour, but also shamfastnes. And let hir remembre, that she is a wyfe, in whome Plutarche wolde haue bothe great loue and great demurenes coupled and ioyned together. They saie, that the queenes of Perse were wont to kepe priuate and sobre feastes with their husbandes,

not

but as for in wanton banketes came none but syngers, mynstrelles, and concubynes, wedlocke was had in suche reuerence. For as the noble prince was wonte to saie, A wife was a name of dignitee and not of bodily lust: so the husbande is a name of couplyng and affinitee, as I haue declared.

¶ Nor the housbandes ought not to geue theim selfe vnto ouer muche pleasure, nor to delite in any company but their wyues, but our purpose is not here to teache the housbandes. Howe be it, it is not conuenient for them to be maisters of wātonnes and lechery vnto their wyues. And let theim euer remembre this saiynge of Xystus the philosopher: He is an adulterar with his wyfe, who so is ouer excedynge and ouer hote a louer. And let hym obey the apostle Paule, saiyng vnto husbandes, that they shulde haue their wyues as vessels of generacion in holynes, and not in vnlefull or immoderate, concupiscence as the pagans dooe, that knowe not god. The spouse in the canticles calleth his spouse syster, to the entent to make his loue more mesurable: but we wyll returne agayne vnto women. 1. Thes. 4.

¶ Lette theim not defoyle the holy and honest bed of wedlocke with fylthy and lecherous actes. The chaste wyfe of Spartane, whan she was asked, if she vsed to go vnto hir housbande, Nay perde (saied she) but he vnto me. For the chast woman neuer prouoked the lust of hir housbande, nor vsed the bodily pleasure, but for hir housbandes pleasure.

¶ Trebellius Pollio writeth, that Zenobia, the quene of Palmyra, a very wel lerned and a wise woman was of so great chastitee, that shee wolde not lye with hir housbande, without she had proued before, whether she

were with chylde or no. For whan she had lyen with hym, she wolde tarye hir tyme, to se whether shee had conceyued: and if she had not, than was she contente to suffre hir husbandes wil agayne. Who wold thinke, that this woman had any lust or pleasure in hir body? This was a woman worthy to be had in honour and reuerence, whiche had no more pleasure in hir naturall partes, than in hir foote or hir fynger. She had ben worthy to haue borne childzen withouten mans company, whiche neuer desyred it, but only for childzen: or els to haue brought theim forth without peyne, whiche gate theim without pleasure. But one of our christen women, called Ethelfryda, a quene of Englande, dyd a greatter acte, whiche after she had borne one chylde, neuer laye more with hir husbande. And yet one Edelthrudis, queene of the same countrey, passed hir: whiche had had. ii. housbandes, and made theim bothe to kepe perpetuall chastitee. There were also other couples, that lyued together without carnall dealyng, as Henricus Bauarus, the prince of Rome, and Senegunda his wyfe: Julianus the martyr, and Basilia his wyfe: and in the citee of Alexander, Chrysanthus, and Daria his wyfe: and Amos with his wyfe. For these holy folkes vnderstode well enough, that thynge whiche is writen of wyse men, that the bodily pleasure is vnworthy this excellent nature of ours, whiche wee haue of the soule. And therfore euery body dispiseth it the more, and casteth it awaie, the more that he hath of that excellencie of the soule, and the nigher that he is to god, and other heauenly myndes, neyther wyll vse this pleasure often, excepte it be suche as haue but beastly, vyle, and abiecte myndes, and haue taken muche of

vile

vyle nature, and verey little of that high and celestiall nature. You wyues, whan you put of your smockes, put on shamefastnes, and kepe alwaie bothe daie and nyght, bothe in company of other men and of your husbandes, bothe in the lyght and in the darke, that moste honest vayle of nature. Let neuer god, let neuer angeles, let neuer your owne conscience espy you bare of the couer of shamefastnes. For there is nothynge more foule and lothsome, than you be, if you be naked of that Couer. The wyse and sad poet Hesiodus wolde not haue women to put of their smockes in the nyghtes, by cause the nightes be the immortall goddes. Shamfastnesse.

Of Ieolosy. The. vii. Chapter.

Cicero, calleth Ieolosy after thopinion of the stoicke philosophers, a care of a mans mynde, leste an other shulde haue as well as he, that thynge, whiche hym selfe woulde enioye alone. It is called also a feare, lest an other man shulde haue in commen with him that thyng, whiche he wold haue to be seuerally his owne. what wordes so euer they expounde it with, verily it is a sore veracion and agony, and a verey cruel tyrannye, whiche as longe as it reigneth and rageth in the housbandes herte, lette the wyfe neuer hope to haue peace. It were better for them bothe to bee deade, than any of them to fall into Ieolosy, but specially the man. what peynes or tourment can be compared, both for hym that is vexed with the inquietnes of Ieolosy, and hym of whome the feare is? Therof ryseth gronynge, complaynynge, crienge, with hate bothe of hym selfe and other, and perpetuall suspection of harme, and chydyng, braulyng, fyghtynge, yea and also mur-

der,

der. For we haue bothe red and heard tel of many, that haue slayne theyr wyues, moued onely with ieolosy. The which affection dooeth also rage in wylde beastes: For Aristotell wryteth, that the lyon wyll all to teare the lyones, if he take hir in aduitrye. And I my selfe, with many other mo, haue seen the Cocke swanne kyll his henne, because she folowed an other cocke. Therefore let the woman labour withall hir power, least this fantasye come vpon hir husbande: or if it come vppon hym, to get hym out of it, and cause hym to leaue it. And that shall she dooe onely by one meane, that is if she neyther saie nor do, that hir husbande maie take suspycion of. Saynct Paule, sainct Hieronyme, Aristotle, and many other great and wyse men counsaile verie well, that folkes neyther dooe yll, nor any thynge that longeth to yll.

¶ Paraduenture thou wylte saie, that this is an harde thyng. For who can rule other mens suspciousnes: Yes, many waies. Fyrste if thou lyue chastly, and that is the readiest waie. For tyme euer bryngeth foorth the trouthe, and tyme causeth the falseheade to fade and vanishe awaie, and confirmeth and strengtheth the trouth. If thou be good, and haue a ieolous husband, yet maiest thou hope that he wyll putte awaie that vnquietnes of mynde. But and thou be naughte, be sure, that that fantasie shall neuer goe frome hym, but rather encrease daiely. Fynally, if thou suffre thy husbandes ieolosye gyltles, thou arte happie, if gylty, thou arte vnhappie. Therfore shalte thou bothe loue thyne husbande, and labour that he maie perceyue hym selfe loued: but beware that thou vse no feignyng nor dissymulacion: For than the more craftely that he seeth

the

the dissemble, the more sore will he hate the. For feigning neuer lyghtly cometh to the poynt that it is purposed: but for the more parte cleane contrarie. Dissimulacion.

¶ I geue women often warnynge, and ofte in deede they nede warnynge, and muche more the men, that they disceiue not theim selfe, supposyng to bee no force, whether one do a thyng in deede, or seme to dooe it. For they be but fooles and ignorannt, that wene they shall alter the nature of thynges with colourynge and feygnyng. Let hir shewe hir selfe not onely to loue no man so well as hir husbande, but also to loue none other at all but hym. If she loue any other, leat it be but for hir husbandes sake: or if she can not loue hir husbandes frendes, yet let hir not hate theim. For there be many men, that can be well contente, and there to verie gladde, to haue all other thynges in comon with theyr wyues, excepte frendes. And in the same mynde be wyues to, as concernyng theyr maydes, and other women that they loue. Whan she is foorthe abrode, let hir vse great demurenes, neyther loue gladly to kepe companye, or comon with other womens husbandes, neyther with women that haue a naughtie name, neyther abyde the syght of any baude: as for letters, lette hir neyther geue nor receiue, hir husbande vnknowyng. Leat hir speake but lyttell of other womens husbandes. Neyther praise theyr fayrenes, or any good propretee of their person, neyther gladly geue an eare vnto any that praiseth theim, nor loke muche vpon theim, neyther do any thyng afore theim, that shoulde be occasion to any body to suspecte yll. These muste I nedes saie, because that I woulde she shoulde not onely eschewe harme, but also euery thyng that beareth the colour of harme.

Nowe will I speake of the womans ieolosy, whiche if she haue any, I will not greatly go about muche remedy, to get it awaie, so it bee not to muche and to violente, and trouble peace of all the house, and vexe hir husbande. For if it were suche, than it were good for to seke remedy. Fyrst and formoste let the woman consyder, that hir husbande is hir lorde, nor that she maie dooe by ryght all that he maie. For the man is not so muche bounde as the woman to kepe chastitee, at leaste wates by the lawes of the worlde, for by goddes lawe bothe be bounde in lyke. Leat hir consider, that the man lyueth more at libertee than the woman, and hath more to care for. For she hath nothynge to see to, but hir honestie. Lette hir stoppe hir eares vnto suche, as tell hir yll of hir husbande, and thynke they dooe it but to pyke a thanke.

Hermyone, wyfe vnto Cadmus the kynge of Thebis, whan she hadde gone frome hir husbande, moued by ieolosy, she complayneth and soroweth in the tragedie of Euripides the poete, saiyng, that muche resort of women vnto hir had vndone hir, because she hadde geuen lystenynge and credence vnto those sclanderers. Therfore if a woman purpose to forsake hir husbande for his concubines, or els for to braule fore with hym, leat hir call vnto remembraunce the woordes, that a certaine man spake ones, whan he chased a fugytiue seruaunt that he had, and he ran into the backe house: I am glad (saied he) to se the there as I wolde haue put the, and I had catched the: so leat the wyfe thynke, that she coude do nothyng that shoulde more please hir husbandes concubyne, than if she renne frome hir house and hir husbande, or elles be at debate with hym. For than

than she wyl thynke to haue his fauour the more, whan she seeth his wyfe caste it of with hir frowardnes, beside the speache of people, whiche thynge is worse for a woman, than to suffre any kynde of peyne with hir housebande.

¶We reade in storyes, that yonge and newe maryed women, whan their housbandes many tymes for the loue of huntynge hathe layne out all night, they haue suspected them with other women, and folowed them in the wooddes and forestes, and there in the darke haue been kylled with arrowes, and torne with dogges, in the steade of wylde beastes, and suffered great peyne for theyr curious ieolosy. But howe muche more curtesly and wysely dyd Tertia Emilia, wyfe vnto Affricane the fyrste, whiche whan she sawe that hir housebande had a fantasye vnto one of hir maydes, dissembled the matter, leste she shoulde seme to condempne, of incontinency the vanquissher of the worlde, and the prynce of hir countrey, and also hir self of impacience, that coulde not suffre a wronge of hir husbande, whiche was the noblest man of the worlde in his tyme. But because no man shulde thynke, that she kepte any grutche in hir herte, she maryed that same woman, that had been hir housebandes concubyne, vnto an honest man of hir owne seruauntes, supposynge, that if folkes departed out of this lyfe, haue any remembraunce or kelynge of worldly matters, that dede shulde be a great pleasure vnto hir husbandes soule.

¶This wyse women knewe well enough, that she was the wyfe and the lady of the house, whether so euer hir husbande went. And if she shoulde beare any grudge, that hir husbande shoulde lye with other women, that

were but a fantasy of bodily pleasure, and not of loue. Moreouer, if the wyfe shulde take displeasure with hir housebande, she shulde but prouoke hym the more: and if she suffre hym, she shall the soner reclayme hym, and specially whan he dothe perceyue and compare to gether hir gentle maners, and his concubynes vnreasonable pryde: for so Terence, a peyncter and declarer of the worldes condicions, writeth in the comedy called Hecyra, that Pamphilus was gotten frome Bacchis his concubyne, whom he loued so well: and brought awaye his mynde vnto his wyfe, after that he had ones consydered and knowen well hym selfe, and Bacchis, and his wyfe that was at home, estemynge bothe theyr maners as they were in dede, how his wyfe was, as an honeste woman ought to be, sobre, demure, & shamfast: and howe she suffered all the harmes and wronges that hir husbande dyd vnto hir, and kepte hir displeasure in close: than his mynde by littell and littell ouercomen, partly with pitie, that he had on his wyfe, partly with wronges doone by Bacchis, fell cleane out frome Bacchis, and tourned all his loue vnto his wyfe, seyng she was of condicions accordynge to his appetite. Thus sayeth Terence.

¶ Neyther I wyl let passe the dedes of that noble woman, whiche whan hir husbande was taken with loue of an other mans wyfe, and she sawe him go daily vnto hir with ieoperdy of his life, because of the womans husbande and hir bretherne, that laye styll in watche for hym, saied vnto hir husbande in this maner: Syr I se you can not be gotten awaye frome the loue of that woman, neyther I wyll require that of you, I desyre you onely, that you loue not with so great ieoperdye of

your

your lyke: she saieth she wyl be content to go with you. Therefore bryng hir home vnto your owne castell, and I shall leaue hir all this the moste goodlyest part of the place, and go my selfe into an other, and I promyse you of my fayth, to entreate hir none other wyse than myne owne syster: yf you fynde contrarye, dryue me out of the house, and let hir abyde. So in conclusion she perswaded hir housebande: and vpon a nyght he brought his concubyne in to his castell, sore trembling and fearyng hir louers wyfe. But she receyued hir moste gentelly and courtesly, and brought hir in to hir chambre, nor neuer called hir but syster, and sente vnto hir twyse a daie, and commaunded she shulde bee entreated more tenderly and dayntily than hir owne selfe, without any token of hate, either in word or dede. Than saied she vnto hir housebande: Nowe maie you vse your loue with lesse care and ieoperdy. So the man, of an holle yere came not at his wife: whiche was bothe fayrer and more noble of byrthe, and honest, and in all poynctes more goodly than his concubyne. What shee thought in hir mynde, onely god knoweth: but as farre as men coulde perceyue, she toke no displeasure with the matter at all, specially after she had rydde hir husbande out of ieoperdy. Muche was she in the churche, and muche in prayer, and euery man knewe wel enough hir trouble, but no man knewe that euer shee grutched or complayned. Within a yere, this man tourned his mynde holly vnto his wyfe, and beganne to hate his concubyne deadly, and at the last put hir awaie, and set all his loue vpon his wyfe, in so muche that euer after he saied, that all his mynde, his lyfe, and his herte was in hir, and nowe he saieth, he will not lyue longe after,

if it shulde chaunce hir to dye. I wyll not name theim, because they be bothe on lyue.

¶ These examples haue I brought of theim that haue an euident cause of ieolosy. For as for theim that be not sure of any cause, and vnreasonable, and intollerable, and cause great veracion, bothe vnto their selfe and vnto their husbandes, for an offence, that they wotte not whether it be so or not, as many do, whiche either loue inordinatly, or folowe their owne fantasies ouer muche. they take lyght suspiciousnes and feble coniectoures, for great and euedent argumentes. If hir housbande bourde with an other woman, let not the wyfe streighte suspecte, that he loueth hir. A great parte of this affection commeth of beleue, and ryseth after of opinion and suspection, than matter in dede. Therfore lette not the woman be taken with euery lyght suspection, whiche ought not to be moued or agreued though shee knewe any thyng in dede.

Of raymentes. The.viii. Chapter.

Also rayment in lyke wyse as all other thynges oughte to be referred vnto the housebandes will, if he lyke symple rayment, let hir be content to weare it. For if she desyre more goodly and costly, than it appereth, that she trymmeth not hir selfe so muche for hir housbandes eies as other mennes: whiche is no poynct of an honest woman what shuld a woman do with gold or siluer, that is a Christen woman, and also whose husband deliteth not therin? Thou woman, wylt thou not apply thy selfe vnto Christes rayment at thy housbandes byddyng whiche oughtest, if he wolde haue it so, to weare the diuelles habite.

Sayncte

¶Sainct Ambroſe ſpeaketh of peinctyng in this maner. Hereof (ſaieth he) cometh thoſe inflampynges of vices, to peincte theyr faces with colours, leaſt men ſhuld myſlyke theim, and with the adultery of theyr face, they go about adultery of theyr body. What a madnes is it, to chaunge the naturall ymage, and take a picture: and whiles they feare theyr huſbandes iudgement, to vtter theyr owne? For ſhe geueth fyrſt iudgement of hir ſelfe, that woulde bee other wyſe than ſhe was borne: and ſo while ſhe gothe aboute to be lyked of other, fyrſte of all ſhe diſlyketh hir ſelfe.

¶Sainct Ambroſe in theſe woordes ſheweth what his mynde is, if the houſebande haue not ſpecially commaunded his wyfe to dooe ſo. Neyther any wyſe man wyll commaunde it. But if he dooe commande, or if ſhe knowe that it be his will, than for his mynde and pleaſure leat hir dooe this. But than ſhall ſhe ſaie as ſainct Heſter ſaied, whan ſhe was apparelled and tyred with all the diuels pompe. Thou knoweſt good lorde (ſaied ſhe) my neceſſitee, and that I abhorre this ſigne of pride » and of myne honour vpon my heade on the daies of my » pompe, and I courſe it as a cloute defyled with bloude, » neyther vſe to weare it on ſuche daies as I maie bee at » reſt. Therfore if a woman bee at hir lybertee to weare » what apparell ſhe lyſte, leat hir remembre, that there is » no cauſe greatly deſyred, wherfore ſhe oughte to deſyre to be proudely and goodly apparelled, ſeyng ſhe is maryed, and hath caught already that, whiche other ſaieth they hunte for with ſuche nettes.

¶Sainct Cyprian the martyr byddeth maryed women take heede, that thei dooe not flater and excuſe their owne fantaſyes, and lykynges in theim ſelfe with theyr huſ=

husbandes, leaste whan they laie theyr husbandes for theyr excuse, they take them for fellowes and accessaries of theyr vyce.

¶ I haue shewed myne opinion afore already, as concernyng apparell: nowe it is beste to geue an eare vnto saincte Peter and Paule, whiche bad a christen wyfe weare simple rayment, and bee more goodly in holynes of lyuyng, than golde or precious stones. And in deede an honest woman hath other more goodly atirementes, whiche as the wise man Xistus sayeth, standeth in chaste demeanour and honest bryngyng vp of hir chyldren, as Cornelia Gracchus wyfe was wont to saie: and also in hir husbandes honour, or worshyp.

1. Peter. 3.

¶ The wife of Philo the wise man, whan she went forth vpon a time without a golden garland on hir head, and other noble women dyd weare, one asked hir, why she had none, she answered againe: The husbandes honour and vertue is ornament enough vnto the wyfe.

¶ Who dyd not more regarde the wyfe of Cato, whiche was no very riche man, than al the wiues of a great meany of Publicannes, whiche flowed in goodes? Also it was more honour for Xantippe to be wife vnto poore Socrates, than either vnto Scopa, or any other ryche man in those daies. Democrates saieth, that the ornament of a woman is small apparell and lyttell speache, and she is the moste honourable that hath the best husbande. Not withstandynge, as I woulde haue a wyfe to vse no precious apparell, lykewyse no more doo I alowe fylthy and sloberye rayment. Also some thynge muste be done for the tyme, place, and common custome, but not excedynge, but rather muche lesse than they require.

Ari-

Aristotle in his bokes of house kepyng woulde haue a woman to vse lesse rayment and apparell, than the lawes and customes of the citee dose apoynt. For she ought to consyder (saieth he) that neyther goodly clothyng, nor excellent beautie, nor abundaunce of golde, shall cause a woman so great worshyp, as shall sobrenes in all thynge, and studie to lyue chaste and honestly. Therfore ought she rather to regarde reason, vertue, and holynes, than vayne iudgementes and erronious customes, whiche haue been brought vp by some vngracious folkes, and accepted, and confirmed by the corrupte and foolysshe fantasyes of the comon people. Wherfore some good and vertuous wyues ought with one assent to resyst and goe againste suche customes, and by sklendre and symple apparell do theim selfe that is conueniente, and shewe exaumple vnto other, what waie they ought to take: and it shulde be a greatter praise for them to put awaie an yll custome, than folowe it. Nor there is no dispayre, but some maie bringe downe that againe, whiche was brought vp by some. For the consent and agreement of good women shoulde preuayle as muche in goodnes, as the consent of yll women hath preuayled in naughtines, if they woulde ones begynne to stryue together. who shoulde passe other in honestie, measure, and chastitee, and recken it a worshyp to gette the victorie in these thynges, and not in the bostynge of ryches: whiche thynge dooeth soone induce lyght myndes into a greatte enuie, and stryfe, but fewe doeth enuie that an other shulde be more vertuous than she, or more pacient, or loue hir husbande better: but many dooe enuie, if an other shoulde haue more apparell, chaynes, brouches, ouches, or rynges,

than ſhe. O proude and foolyſhe beaſtes, euen created vnto vanitee and pompe, here vppon ryſeth ſtryke and procedeth foorthe with ſuche feruent myndes, as Cato ſaieth verate wyſely in the ſtory of Liuius, that the riche women woulde haue that, whiche none other ſhoulde be able to come by. And on the other ſyde, the poore women, leaſt they ſhulde be diſpiſed and naught ſet by, by that meanes thei ſtreigne them ſelfe aboue theyr power. And ſo whan they be aſhamed of that, that they ſhulde not, and nothynge aſhamed of that, they ſhoulde bee, they robbe bothe theyr huſbandes and their children, to clothe theim ſelfe with, and leaue hunger and pouertee at home, that they maie go foorthe theim ſelfe laden with ſylke and golde. Wherfore they compell theyr huſbandes vnto ſhamefull craftes to gette by, and myſcheuous deedes, with theyr whynynge and gronyng, leaſt their kyns women, alyaunce, or theyr neyghbour ſhulde ſeme richer or more gloryouſly apparelled than thei. And yet all theſe outragious and intollerable thynges mought be ſuffered, if they dyd not ſell awaie theyr chaſtitee, to gette thereby that theyr huſbandes either wyll not geue theim, orels for lacke can not geue.

¶ Some remedy ſhulde be founde for theſe euilles, either by the conſent and agrement of ryche mens wiues, whiche with theyr example ſhulde reuoke other againe vnto better mynde: or els ſome lawe woulde bee made, ſuche as the lawe was in Rome called Oppius lawe, to bridle and meaſure womens coſtelynes. Theſe Chriſten preachers, ſhoulde folowe the exaumple of the pagane Pythagoras, or rather paſſe hym in ſuche a goodlye ſtryfe, of whome the cronicler Juſtyne writeth in this maner.

¶Pythagoras taught women chastitee and obedience vnto their housbandes, and often dyd tell theym, that the mother of vertues was sobre dyet and harde fare: and he brought to passe with continuall disputyng and preachynge vnto theym, that the wyues layde awaye golden and garnisshed clothes, and other ornamentes of theyr state, and refused theim as instrumentes of ryotte and superfluitee. For he affirmed, that the true garnisshynge and ornamentes of wyues was chastitee, and not clothyng.

¶Of walkyng abrode. The.ix.Chapter.

IT is becommynge for maryed women to go lesse abrode than maydes, because they haue that whiche that maydes shulde seme to seke. Therfore lette theim cast all their mynde to kepe wel them that thei haue gotten, and study to please them onely. The maker of the lawes of the Lacedemonians bad, that the wiues, whan they went forthe abrode, shulde couer theyr faces, because it was not conuenient for them, eyther to loke on other men, or to be loked vpon of other men, seynge they haue at home alredy, whome all onely they ought to loke vpon, and be loked vpon withall. Whiche custome the people of Perselande, and al the east quarter of the worlde, with moste parte of the Grekes dyd vse. ¶But I wolde not they shulde wrappe their heade, as nowe a dayes the custome is to do in many countreies of Europe, that is to go vnknowen, and vnsene of other folkes, but theim selfe bothe to se and to knowe other. In the whiche doynge I wonder not so muche of the womans delite, delite quod he? Nay I wolde say, the thycke shamelesnes vnder that thyn couer, as I dooe

their husbandes folishnes, that dooe not se, howe great an occasion of viciousnes it is. Thei wyll do no harme I wys saie they: well, I woulde they had neuer doone. And though they wolde do none, yet it is not good to open suche a wyndowe of libertee. Therfore let the womens faces be bare of clothes, but closed and couered with shamfastnes. For that couerynge was not so muche ordeyned to couer the woman, that no man shuld se hir, as it was, that she shulde se no man.

¶ Fauna wife vnto Faunus, kynge of Thaborigines, lyued many yeres, and yet dyd neuer man se hir, but Faunus hym selfe. Therfore after hir deathe, she was worshipped for a goddesse, and named the good goddesse, and hir sacrafice was kepte, that no man mought lawfully come to it, neyther any ymage of male beast be there while it was a doynge. Nor I saie not this because I wolde haue women continually shette vp and kepte in, but because I wolde haue them go seldome abrode, and be littell amonge men: whiche thyng they shall best content their husbandes with all.

¶ What pleasure thynke you it was vnto kynge Tygranes, whiche whan he had byd Cirus kyng of Perse vnto a banket, and after the banket was done, muche communicacion there was of the comely person and fairnes of Cirus, than Tygranes asked his wife what she thought by Cyrus? Uerily saied she, I can not tell: for so god loue me, all the banket while, I neuer loked at any man but you.

¶ A vertuous wife wyl neither gladly here other men nor of theim, nor dispute of any mannes person. For what hath she a do with other mennes fayrenes, whiche ought to count all in like fayre and foule, saynge hir

houf=

husbande. Let hir thynke hym fayrer than any other, more proper than any other, lyke as the mother dothe hir onely childe. In the Canticles of the Byble, the spouse thynketh his spouse fayrest of all women: and agayne, she thynketh hym the fayrest of all men. Lyke wise Duellius had a great fauour vnto his wyues simplicitee, I wyll tell it in sayne Hieronimes wordes.

¶Duellius (saieth he) whiche had the firste triumphe at Rome, for battaile on the sea, maried a goodly maide, called Bilia, whiche was so vertuous and chaste that shee was exaumple vnto all other in that same worlde, whan it was not onely a vyce, but also a wonder to see a woman nought. So vpon a tyme this Duellius, whan he was aged and weake and trembleyng, chaunsed to falle out and chide with an other man, in whiche wordes, that other man rebuked hym of his stynkynge breethe. So he wente home displeased there with, and there blamed his wyfe, because she neuer had tolde him that he myght haue founde some remedy for it: I wolde haue tolde you saied shee, but that I went euery mans breethe had smelled so. This noble and chaste woman was to bee praysed: for whether she dydde not knowe the faute of hir husbande, or suffered it pacientlye, and because hir housbande dyd soner lerne his faute and hurte of his body by his ennemies yll wordes, than his wyues lothyng. The same thynges men saie, chaunsed vnto Hiero kynge of Siracuse.

¶But those women can not saie so, that kysse many men afore they haue husbandes, and many whan they haue housebandes. what demurenes I wolde haue kepte abrode, it maie be perceyued well enough, by that whiche I woulde haue kepte at home in hir chamber,

with hir husbande by nyght. Wherto shoulde I speake of that rude and vncomly maner, whiche is vsed in many countreies, that men and their wyues shall washe bothe together in one bayne: This custome is not ones to be named: for it is rather beastly than mete for any reasonable folkes.

¶I wolde haue a woman to here but fewe wordes, namely where men talke: and speake lesse. And if she thynke she shall here or see any vnclenly thyng, conuey hir selfe awaie quickly.

¶Kynge Hiero, whome I spake of here before, condempned the poet Epicharmus in a great summe of money, because he had rehersed an vnclenly matter in the quenes presence.

¶Augustus Cesar, gaue a commaundement, that no woman shulde come and se wrastlers, because they were wonte to wrastle naked. Nor it was no wonder that he dyd so, for this Cesar was he that made the lawes of chastitee and adultery. Therfore I wolde not haue a woman to speake, except it be a thyng that shuld do hurt to be kept in. Neither here, or at lest wyse geue no hede vnto suche matters as partaine not to thencrealyng of vertue. The poet Iuuenall rebuketh such women as be wyse, what the people of Seres and Thrase dooe: and what sturryng is all the worlde ouer.

¶Also Cato in his oracion, that he made of women, wolde an honest wyfe shulde be ignorant, what lawes be made or annulled in hir countrey, or what is done amonge men of lawe in the courte. And here vpon rose this common saiyng of the Greeks: womens wordes ought to be webbes of clothe, and not eloquent oracions. And Aristotle saieth, it is lesse rebuke for a man to

bee

be busie to knowe, what is done in his kytchyn, than for the woman, what is dooen without hir house. Therfore he byddeth, that she shall neyther speake nor heare at all of any mattiers of the realme.

¶ Seneke writeth, that his aunte, for syxtene yere together, while hir husbande was president in Aegypte, was neuer seene foorthe of hir house, nor neuer receiued into hir house anye of that countrey: nor neuer asked any thynge of hir husbande, nor suffered any thyng to be asked of hir selfe. Therfore saieth he, that same countrey, whiche is verate blablyng, and wyly to finde faute with theyr rulers, in the whiche many a man hath ruled without faulte, howe bee it not without yll name, yet they gaue reuerence vnto hir, as a speciall exaumple of holynes, and kepte in all theyr raylyng wordes, whiche is hearde for hym to doo, that hath a pleasure in leoperdous conseites. And yet vnto this daie they wysshe for suche an other as she, thoughe they haue no hope to get hir. It had bene a great thynge, if the countrey had lyked hir but. xvi. daies, but it was a greatter thyng, that they knewe hir not. These be Senekes wordes. For that holy and wise woman vnder stode well enough that ofte accompanyng with men, shoulde hyndre some of hir good name: as it doeth no good to fyne clothe to be handled of many.

¶ There be some women, that beare theim selfe high of other folkes honour, as of theyr husbandes, brother, kynsman, and some of a frende, with whome they haue verate smal acquaintance. what a folye is this to handle thy selfe so, that an other shall be made good and woorthye honoure, for his owne vertue, and thou made naught and vnwoorthy honoure, with an other bodies

vertue:

vertue: And many there be, that so abuse theyr kynse-mens power, that they make bothe them selfe, and theim that haue the power, hated by the meanes: as the wyfe of the brother of Vitellius the emperour, whiche toke more vpon hir, because of hir brother in lawes principalitee, than the emperours wyfe hir selfe did. The hedy dominacion of the sisters of Hiero kynge of Siracuse, moued the people vnto insurrection, wherewith bothe the kynge and all his children were destroyed.

¶ There was also in our daies a certaine noble man, that hadde a wonderous proude wyfe, and it chaunced hym to be tourned out of all his goodes and possessions at ones, whom euery man thought was well serued, because the woman vsed hir selfe so proude and arrogantly vpon hir husbandes power.

¶ Therfore you women, that wyll medle with comon mattiers of realmes and citees, and wene to gouerne people and nacions with the braydes of your stomackes, you go about to hurle downe townes afore you, & you lyght vpon an harde rocke: where vpon thoughe you brouse & shake countreys verate sore, yet they scape and you perysshe. For you knowe neyther measure nor ordre: and yet whiche is the worst poynt of all, you wene you knowe verate well, and wyll bee ruled in nothynge after theim that be experte. But you attempte to drawe all thyng after your fantasye without discrecion. Wene you it was for nothynge, that wyse men forbadde you rule and gouernaunce of countreys: and that saincte
1.Co.14. Paule byddeth, you shall not speake in congregacion and gatherynge of people: All this same meaneth, that you shall not medle with mattiers of realmes or citees: your owne house is a citee greatte enoughe for

you

you, as for fooythe abyode, neyther knowe you, nor bee you knowen.

¶ Thucidides wolde not, that a good woman shoulde bee as muche as praised with the common voyce: and muche lesse dispraised. But he wolde she shuld be clerely vnknowen, neyther the common fame to make anye mencion of hir. It is no great signe of honestie for a woman to be muche knowen, talked, and songe of: and to bee marked by some speciall name in many mennes mouthes: as to be called fayre: or cocled eyed, squynt, browne, halte, fatte, pale or leane. For these thynges in a good woman ought to bee vnknowen abyode, as we haue shewed in the boke afore. Not withstandynge there be some that muste nedes be abyode, for theyr lyuyng, as those that bye and sell: whiche, if it were possible, I woulde not that women shoulde be put to those busynesses: and if it muste nedes be so, let olde women do theim, or maryed women that be paste myddle age. But if yonge women muste nedes dooe this, let theim be curteyse without flatteryng woordes, and shamefast without presumption, and rather take losse in theyr marchaundise, than in theyr honestie. I sate this because of some, whiche do entyse byers to theim with exceedyng flatteryng woordes. But Plautus sateth, It is no poynct mete for an honest wyfe, but for a harlotte, to flatter other men: whose disceytes within a whyle whan men knowen theym, they eschewe as wareyne as the meremaydes songe. Shamefastnes shall gette a great deale more gaynes, whome the byer shall conjecture bothe by the face and conditions, wyll neyther lie nor disceiue theym. A ryche marchaunte hath pleasure in pleasaunte woordes and merye conceytes: But yet

fewe wyll geue money for theim: and whan it cometh to the marchaundyse in ernest, no man wyll beleue suche wanton speache. But how so euer these mattiers be, lette a woman euer haue this in mynde and remembraunce, that the onely treasure of a woman is Honestie with Shamefastnes.

¶ Nowe seeyng I woulde haue an honest wyfe thus ordred at home, you maie easily perceiue howe I do allowe, that she shoulde go to warre and handle armour, whiche I woulde not she shulde ones name. And wolde to god all christen men wolde laie theim awaie. Nowe that wydowe Judith is vanysshed awaie, whiche was but a shadowe and signification of thynges to come, and with hir continence and holynes cutte of the heade of Holopherne, that is to saie the deuyll. Nowe Delbora, that iudged Israell, geueth place vnto the gospell of Christe: howe bee it she didde not helpe the people of god fyghtyng, so muche by counsayle and feates of warre as by fastynge, prayenge, and prophesiynge. of the whiche two women sainct Ambrose, after that he had intreated in the boke of wydowes, tourned his speache vnto christen women, saieyng: The churche ouercometh not their aduersaries power by secular armour, but with spirituall armour: whiche be stronge enoughe afore god to destroye the fences and the sleightes of spirituall naughtines. The armour of the churche is faith, the armour of the churche is praier, whiche ouercometh the aduersarie.

¶ A woman ought not to shewe forth abrode any signe of presumpcion, disdeigne, or deintee stomacke, neyther by woordes, countenaunce, nor pace: but all shall bee symple, and vpright forth, demure, sobre, and tempered

and

and spiced with shamfastnes. And because the light mindes of some will be lyghtly sterred with neuer so litteil a blast of honour, it is necessarie to geue theim warnyng. to be moze sad and wyse, than to be moued with so litel a winde: oz to be ignozãt how foolishe and how litel wozth that thyng is, whiche we call honour. What matter maketh it, whether thou bee called Cozнelia, oz maistres Cozнelia? O tendze herte, that wyll be sterred with one sounde of a woozde. Thou foole, dooest not thou see, that thou arte no maistres foz callyng so? Howe do thei that call women queenes and Empzesses, do they make them so, because they call theim? The aungell Gabziell called his quene and ladie but Mary by hir name, and thou disdeignest to bee called by the name of one better than thy selfe. What an ignozance arte thou in of that thyng, whiche thou desyzest? Foz men vse to calle that woman their ladie oz maistres, that is theyz paramour. Foz she in deede is a mans ladie and tyzanne ouer hym, vnto whom he serueth humbly and subiectly.

¶ Mozeouer what fozce is it, whether thou sytte oz walke fyzste oz laste? In some countreys, the first hath the pzeheminence, in some countreis the last, and in some the myddle. Wherfoze this thyng is but made by mens opinion, and not by nature. Therfoze if thou wilte doo after opinion, and content it, whan so euer thou arte the fozmoste, thynke thy selfe in that countrey, where the fozmoste bee pzeferred. Whan thou arte in the myddle, thynke thy selfe there, where the myddle hath the honoure. And whan thou arte the laste, suppose thou arte amonge theim that moste esteeme the laste. And so where so euer thou arte, thou shalte thynke thy selfe well regarded.

And agayne on the other syde, leste thou shouldest waxe to haute with thyne honour, whan thou art in the moste honourable rowme, suppose thy selfe to be amonge that people, where that place is the lowest.

Nowe as for goynge out of the waie, for reuerence to geue an other rowme, that is nothynge but as the moze mightie shulde suffre the weaker or the holle, fauour the lame, or the lusty and well likynge, the weake and sicke, or the empty the laden, or the swyfte the sloo. And weneste thou there is any other cause, why men speke so gentilly vnto women, and set so much by them, and speke them so fayze, and haue them in suche reuerence, but because that lusty and stronge nature dothe handle deyntly that other whiche is weake and feble, wherin neuer so luttel an offence wolde soone enter, and be deape impzinted, lyke as thynne and bzittell glasses wyll catche harme lyghtly: Therfoze you get no honour by your owne merites, but of other folkes courtesye: noz you bee not honoured because you deserue it, but because you soze desyze it. For whan men se you be so gredy and desyzous to haue honour, and that suche a smalle thynge delyteth you so muche, men be contente to do you that pleasure, and calle you maistresses, and laugh vpon you, and speake gentelly to you. For woozdes be no great coste, they geue you the waie, because it is no great let of their iurney, and in the meane season yet they rest theim selfe. They set you the highest, for they can syt well enoughe benethe you: they geue you the better appoynted parte of the house, fyne clothes, golde, syluer, pzecious stones, so do they to their chyldzen, because they shall not wepe. For they reken you no wyser, than chyldzen: noz no moze you be, as

long

longe as you be moued with suche childisshe thynges. And to be shoꝛt, they let you haue such thynges, as they se displease you so muche, if thou lacke theim. And it is an honour and a pꝛayse foꝛ the men, because they sette naught by these thynges: but because they knowe you be of such appetite, no man rekeneth you be moꝛe honorable, because you be honoured of the men, but rather rekenneth them curteise and gentle, whiche do geue honour vnto them, that they knowe be so lothe to lacke it.

¶ I am a man my self: not withstandyng, seyng I haue taken vpon me to teache you, euen foꝛ a fatherly zele and charitee that I bere towarde you. I will neyther hyde noꝛ dissemble any thyng that I shall thynke doth pertayne vnto your instruction and lernyng. Therfoꝛe wyll I open vnto you euen our secretes. Therfoꝛe I wolde ye shulde vnderstande, that we do but laughe at you, and mocke you, with that vaine colour of honour, and the moꝛe desyꝛous that ye be of honour, the moꝛe we mocke you and talke of you in derision, and geue vnto you abundantly that peuishenes, whiche you call honour. But we geue it not foꝛ naught. Foꝛ you geue agayne vnto vs no littell spoꝛte and delectation with the foolishenes of your opinions and fantasies. Truely you vnderstande not, wherin very honoure dooeth stande. It is comely to deserue honoure, but not to couete it. Foꝛ it shulde folowe and ensue, and not bee hunted foꝛ.

¶ Nowe it shall be a sygne vnto you, that you deserue honour, whan you be not agreued to be vnregarded. And that same thynge that wee call honour, is of so frowarde nature and disposicion, that as philosophers wꝛite, a Crocodile dothe so, it followeth them that flee,

and fleeth frome theim that folowe it: and is sharpe to theim that be gentyll to it, and gentyll vnto theim that be sharpe vnto it, Socrates saieth. There is no waie more ready vnto honour, than by vertue: the whiche alonely seketh for none honour, and yet fyndeth it. Salust writeth, that Cato Uticensis had leauer bee good, than seme good. Therefore saieth he, the lesse that he sought for honour, the more it pursued vpon him. Therfore the mooste sure waie vnto veraie honour is vertue, whiche neyther can lacke honour, nor taketh indignacion thoughe it bee dispised. Flatterynges, glosynges, and fayre wordes, what woman so euer rekeneth theim honour and praise, is woorthy for hir folly to haue none other honour or praise. And yet there be some so madde, that thoughe they knowe theym selfe but flattered, yet they wene they be praised. What you wretches, knowe you not, howe farre flatterie differeth frome praise? Wene you that is praise, whiche neyther the person speketh with his herte, and you knowe to, that it is false that he saieth: and that he speaketh not as he thynketh, but eyther to mocke you, or to disceiue you with all?

Beleue no man of your owne goodnes better than your selfe. And she that sercheth and knoweth hir selfe well, fyndeth nothyng in hir selfe at all, that is woorthy any praise, but a mynde, whiche thynketh it selfe vnwoorthy any praise. If there be any goodnes, it cometh of god: and thanke him for it, geue him laudes and thanke. But if there be any eupll, it cometh of our owne vnhappinesse. Wherfore the rebuke standeth vnto our selfe, and the praise perteineth vnto an other.

Nowe seeyng that worldly honour is of so smal price, it is a poynt of a vyle mynde, to enute worldly thynges

vnto

vnto any other body. And if it be shame to enuie for honour, it is muche more shame to haue enuie at other for money, clothing, or possessions. For yet is honour better than all thei. Neyther it is conuenient to haue enuie at other for their beautie, or their welfare, or plentuous teming: these be the giftes of god, as all other goodnes be, that folkes haue. Wherfore thei that enuy for these, seme not to haue enuie at theim, that haue these thynges, but to blame god, whiche so distributeth his benefytes. And me thynketh there is no more cause why, thei shuld be enuied, that haue these, than they that cary bagage in a longe iourney. For what other thynges bee the goodes of this worlde, but a troublesome caryage and gardeuyaunce in this lyfe. Yea and worste of all, they plucke downe with their weighe vnto the erth, myndes that be goyng toward heauen. But if enuie be eschewed, than shall that vyce lyghtly be put awaie, whiche commonly ryseth of enuie, that is sute, chydyng, scoldyng, and makyng theim selfe busie about other folkes matters, to spie and serche what they dooe, what they saie, howe and by what meanes they lyue. Whiche thynge none honest woman will do, but suche as be shameles and woorthy all kynde of rebuke: excepte they dooe it of charitee, to helpe them and thei lacke. For she ought to helpe the poore man, and succour the orphane childe. Happie is she, if that be hir mynde: of whome the prophet speaketh in the psalme on this wyse: Blessed is he, that taketh vnderstanding and knowlage vpon a poore man: god shall deliuer him in the euyll daie: our lorde shall saue hym and quycken hym, and make hym happie vpon earth: and shall not commit hym to his ennemies wyll. Our lorde shall succour hym vpon the bed of his Psal. 40.

of his sorowe: good lorde thou hast serched vp all his bed in the tyme of his infirmitee.

What the wife ought to do at home. The. x. Chapter.

If the wyfe haue skylle to rule an house, with those ii. prorretees, that we spake of before, that is Honestie of body, and great loue towarde hir housbande, than shall all the mariage be more welthye and fortunate: for without this thirde poynct, can be no encrease of house: and without the other twoo, wedlocke can not stande: but it is rather a sore and perpetuall tourment. A woman of Lacedemon, taken ones prisoner in warre, and asked of hir conquerer, what she coulde do: I can sated she, rule an house.

Aristotle saieth, that in an house keppng the mannes duetie is to gette, and the womans to kepe. wherfore nature semeth to haue made them fearefull for the same purpose, lest they shoulde be wasters, and hath geuen them continuall thought and care for lackynge. For if the woman be ouer free, the man shall neuer gette so muche as she will waste in shorte tyme: and so their house must nedes soone decaye. It is not becommynge for an honest wyfe to be a greate spender. Nor they be lyghtly no great sparers of their honestie, that bee so large of their money, as Salust saith by Sempronia, whiche sette more price by any other thynge, than shee dyd by hir woorshyp or hir money. For a man coulde not wel perceyue, whether she regarded lesse hir money or hir good name. How be it, I wolde not haue the woman to be to great a nygarde of hir gooddes, or to lette hir housbande to distribute his money vnto holy vse. In so muche that what penye so euer cometh ones with

in hir

in hir coffer, shoulde neuer fynde waye out agayne: as thoughe it were locked in Labyrinth, or Danaes toure, as many women do, whiche saue no discrecion, howe they shoulde saue and kepe a thynge. Therfore the Essens wolde take no women with theym vnto that holy and religious lyfe, whiche they ledde: because the women coude not away with that communaltie of goodes. For what so euer a woman seeth ones in hir handes, she can not suffre it to go awaye agayne. Therfore let hir vse hir howseholde to sobrenesse and measure. For that is more the womans duetie than the mans. But so yet, that she haue discrecion betwene measure and auarice, and sobrenesse and nygardshyppe. For it is not all one to lyue soberly, and be hungrye. Therefore let hir se, that hir householde lacke neyther meate nor clothe. In whiche poynte, I wolde she shoulde here Aristotles opinion. There be (saieth he) thre thynges, worke, meate, and correction: meate without correction and worke, maketh theim proude and wanton: and worke and correction without meate, is a cruell intreatynge, and maketh the seruauntes weake and feble. Therfore let the wyfe geue hir seruauntes worke to do, and suffycyente meate, as is a seruauntes duetye. But lette hir ordre all thynge after hir housbandes wyll and commaundement: or at the leaste in suche wyse as she thynketh that hir housbande wyll be content: neyther be roughe and harde with hir meynie, but gentyll and fauourable: and as sayncte Hieronyme saieth, more lyke a mother than a maystres: and rather obteyne reuerence of theim with mekenesse, than rygorousnesse: wherunto she may shortely come by the wayes of vertue. For as for chydyng, brawlyng, railyng, scoldyng, and fyghtyng, doth

neyther cause auctoritee nor reuerence, but rather hyndreth them. But wysedome, discrecion, sadde condicions, and grauitee of woordes and sentences, bryngeth all thynge better to passe, than headynes and vyolence. For we feare more them that be wyse and discrete, than them that be angry and hastie. And a quiette rule maie dooe more than rygorous. For quietnes is of more auctoritee than hasty breemnes. Howe be it I wolde not that wyues shulde be sluggyslhe and slouthfull, but I counsayle theim to vse reuerent grauitee, and neither syt so styll as thoughe thei slepte, nor commaunde so foolyslhely, to make them selfe nought sette by, but to wake and take hede, and be sad without crueltee, sharpe without bitternes, diligent without regorousnes. Neither hate none of their householde, if it be not a noughtie persone. And if a seruant haue done longe seruice in hir house, lette hir take hym none other wyse than as hir brother, or hir sonne. We loue cattes and dogges, that haue been nourished any while in our houses: than howe muche more faithfully ought wee to shewe that fauour vnto our euen christen?

Eph 6. Col 3. et 4. 1. Tim. 6. 1. Pet. 2.

¶ Also seruauntes agayne on their partie must be warned, to remembre ẏ saiyng of saynt Paule, that they do their duty diligently, mekely, and buxomly, yea and merily to, and pleasantly: nor bable, nor murmour againe: neyther shewe any displeasaunt countenaunce, lest they leese the thanke of their labour, bothe afore god and man. Also kepe their handes pure from pyckynge and stealyng. In the whiche poynct all wylde beastes be more kynde than many folkes. For what wylde beaste is so outragious, that wyl plucke awaie any thynge of his profet, by whom he hath ben nourished and brought

vp

vp: and quite him with suche a tourne, of whom he hath had so many pleasures? Howe be it no body dothe so, but they that be of vyle stomackes, and euen wooythy to be slaues.

¶ Therfore seruynge maydes shall loue and worshyp their maisters and maistresses, none otherwyse, than though they were theyr fathers and mothers. For the nourisher and bringer vp is as a father. Lette the seruynge maydes neyther saie nor dooe any thyng, wherof the good wyfe of the house or hir doughters maie take any example of yll. For many tymes geuynge yll example, is worse than the dede it selfe. But now to speake of the wyues agayne.

¶ Obedience, and seruyce optayned by fayre meanes, is more faythfull and pleasaunt, than that whiche is gotten with feare. For I wold all feare shuld be awaie, but not obedyence.

¶ Let not the maistres be ouer pleasaunt of speche to hir men seruauntes, neither compenable and mery, nor vse muche conuersacion with theim, nor bolde none of theim to play and daly with hir. I wolde they shulde loue hir, but yet not loue hir so muche as obeye hir. If she wolde not be feared of them as a maistresse, yet cause them to reuerence hir as a mother. For seruantes couet muche their libertee: and if a littel be geuen them, they wyll take more.

¶ I wyll not byd the man so straytly to beware, that he make not his seruantes ouer homely with him, as I wyll the woman, whiche I wolde shulde not be muche conuersaunte amonge hir seruauntes, nor medle moche with them, neither rebuke and correcte the men, but

leaue that for hir husband to do. Let hir be all together amonge hir maydes, whiche I wolde shuld be of honest demeanour, and chast of body, wherunto the maistresse shall helpe muche with hir example: and also with teachynge and shewynge, and diligent ouer lokynge, that nothyng be hyd from hir, howe hir maydes lyue. Lette hir late remedies agaynst vice, as it were preseruatiues agaynst sickenesses.

¶ If she spye or suspect any that dooe not ordre themselfe well, nor can remedye it by chidynge or correction, put hir out of hir house, for the poyson wyll soone infecte all that is nyghe aboute it. And the suspectous people thinketh the maides like their maistresses. Howe ofte saieth sayne Hieronime, that the maistresses be iudged and knowen by the maidens: In so much that there is a prouerbe amonge the greekes, that whelpes haue their maistresses condicions. The yong men in Terence do coniect the maistresses honest liuyng, by the maydes course and negligent apparell.

¶ The poet Homer maketh mencion, that wise Vlisses, after he came home, kylled the seruynge maydes that had layen with the wowers, because they bothe shamed and rebuked his house, and were the occasions of ieoperdy vnto the chastitee of his wyfe Penelope: but shee hir selfe dyd kepe hir occupied with those craftes that I spake of in the first boke, and kepte hir seruauntes at their worke. And so dyd chaste Lucrete, whom the kynges sonnes founde whatchyng and worckyng vpon wolle amonge hir maydes, whiche thynge a wyfe shall do more diligently and busily, if any parte of the fyndynge of hir house be gotten therby. Salomon, where he prayseth an holy woman, saieth: She sought for wolle

wolle and flare, and wrought by the counsayle of hir handes. Theano Metapontina, whan one asked hir, what wyfe was the best, she answered with a verse of Homer in this maner:

She that wooreth ou wolle and webbe,
And kepeth well hir husbandes bed.

By that diligence (saieth the wise kyng) she is made lyke a marchandes shyppe, bryngyng hir breadde from farre countrey. And lest he shulde seme to call hir a sluggarde, he saith moreouer: And shee rose by nyght, and gaue praise vnto hir householde, and vnto hir maydes, not only woorke, but also recreacion of their labour and refection: wherof whan they haue had sufficient, she dealeth the rest in almes. She hath opened hir hande (saieth he) to the nedy, and raught hir fyngers vnto the poore. Prou. 31.

A holy woman ought not to sette hir mynde so sore on gatherynge of goodes: but that she distribute vnto poore folkes, and helpe theim that haue nede, not that nygardely, but largely: remembrynge that she geueth it for hir owne aduauntage, and shall receyue muche more and better rewarde, bothe in this worlde and in an other. The wise man saieth: She shall not care for hir house, for feare of cold snow: she shall not feare, though she geue a peny vnto a poore man, not onely nygardly, wryngynge it through hir fyngers, but also with open hande largely: she shall not feare, for by hir diligence and occupiynge of wolle, hir house shall lacke nothyng necessary for bothe wynter and somer: and all hir houshold shal be arayed in doubled clothyng. For there is nothyng better in an house, than to bee well fed and clothed: not for pleasure, but for their necessitee, not delicately Ibidem.

cately, but profitable. How be it vertue is yll kepte, whiche is moued and inticed with contrary exaumples nygh about. Therfore lette the wyfe hir selfe fyrste of all shewe example of sobre fare, and so shall she make hir seruauntes the most easily to folowe the same: or els hir seruauntes wyll thynke it not reason to require of them, that she wyl not do hir selfe. And so shall she euer haue them murmurynge and grutchynge to keepe hir commandement. Therfore let hir kepe hir selfe euer sobre, not so much because of hir seruauntes, as for hir owne sake. For what a filthy thyng is dronkennes and glottony? The greatest assailers of chastitee and shamfastnes, and enemies of honest name. For euery man wyll abhorre a dronken woman and a great glotton, as an vnlucky signe. Euery man knoweth, that chastitee standeth in ieoperdy amonge excesse of meates.

¶ I wolde the wyfe shuld be ignorant of nothyng that is in hir house, but loke vpon all thynge often tymes, that she maie haue them redy in memorie: lest whan she shall haue nede of them, eyther she shall not knowe of them, or els haue muche trouble in sekyng of them. Also consider in what condicion and state hir house holde standeth, howe muche she maie spende: Howe much she maie kepe, howe she maie clothe: and how she maie fede. Pro. 31. For the wise mã saieth: She hath considered the waies of hir house. This diligence shall encreace muche hir householde store.

¶ I wolde she shulde bee euer amonge hir maydes: whether they be in hir kychen dressynge of meate, or els spynnynge, or weauyng, or sowyng, or brusshyng. For whyle the maistres is by, all thynges shall bee better dooen. And as the wyse man saied. Nothyng shall better

ter

ter kepe an house, or better tylle the grounde, than the maister and the maystres to haue an eye to their house holde store. There is nothyng that kepeth an house longer or better than dooeth a diligent eie of the good wife. ¶ And whan she hathe dooen this, let hir be euer busy with hir owne worke, neither eate hir breadde idell. And than hereth she obey god, whiche wolde not haue vs to eate our breadde without swette of our face. And than she foloweth the example and precepte of sayne Paule, whiche dyd not eate his breadde idel amonge theim, vnto whome he shewed the misteries of our lorde, but laboured and toyled daie and nyght, as muche as he had leysure frome the minystrynge of goddes woorde, and wrought styl, because he wolde put no body to charge, often rehersynge, and sayng, that he was not woorthy to eate, that refused laboure. 2. Thes. 3.

¶ The wyfe shall let no man come in to the house, excepte hir husbande commaunde. Whiche thynge also Aristotle byddeth. And whan hir housbande is forth a dooes, than kepe hir house muche more dilygently shutte. And yet as Plautus saieth, it is conuenient for a good woman to be all one, bothe in hir husbandes absence and presence.

¶ And because the busyneſſe and charge within the house lyeth vpon the womans hande, I wolde she shuld knowe medycines and salues for suche diseases as bee common, and reigne almost daily: and haue those medecines euer prepared redy in some closette, wherwith she maie helpe hir housebande, hir littell chyldren, and hir householde meny, whan any nedeth, that shee nede not ofte to sende for the phisicion, or bye all thynge of the potycaries.

I wolde

¶ I wolde the shulde knowe remedies for suche diseases as come often, as the coughe, the murre, and gnawynges in the bealy, the laske, costifnesse, the wozines, the head ache, peynes in the eyes, for the agewe, bones out of ioynte, and suche other thynges as chaunce dayly by lyght occasions.

¶ Moreouer, lette hir learne to knowe, what maner dyet is good or bad, what meates are holsome to take, what to eschewe, and howe longe, and of what facion. And this I wolde she shuld learne, rather of the experience and vse of sad and wyse women, than of the counsayle of any phisicion, dwellyng nyghe about, and haue them diligentely wzitten in some littell boke, and not in the great valumes of phisicke.

¶ A vertuous wyfe, whan she hath ryd hir householde charge and busynesse, shall euery daye ones, if she maie, or at the leaste on the holy dayes, get hir selfe into some secrete corner of hir house, out of companye: and there for a whyle, laye a parte oute of hir mynde all care and thought of hir house, and there with a quiet mynde, gatheryng hir wyttes and remembzaunce vnto hir, despise these wozldly thynges as trifels, frayle, and vnsure, and that sone shall vanysshe awaye, and because the lengthe of our lyfe is so shozte, and passeth so swyftly, that it seemeth not to be led away, but plucked awaye, neyther to departe, but flee away.

¶ After this lette hir lyfte vp hir mynde vnto the studie and contemplacion of heauenly thinges, by some holy readynge: than confesse hir synnes vnto almyghtye god, and desyze mekely pardon and peace of hym: and pzaye fyzste for hir selfe: and than, whan shee is in moze fauoure with god, for hir housbande, and than for hir

chyldzen

thildren: and after for all hir householde, that our lorde Jesus of his grace wold inspire good minde into them.

¶ Sayncte Paule, the messanger of almightie God, where he enformed and taught the churche of the Corynthians, beginnyng, saieth in this wise: If any man haue a wyfe that is an infidell, yf she be content to tary with hym, lette hym not put hir awaie. And yf any Christen woman haue an husbande an infidel, if he be content to dwell with hir, let hir not go frome hym. For the man, that is an infydel, shalbe blessed by his faithfull wyfe: and the woman that is an infidell, shall bee blessed by hir faythfull husbande. For what canst thou tel woman, whether thou shalt because of thy husbandes saluacion? Or what canst thou telle man, whether thou shalte because of thy wyues saluacion? whyche saienge pertayneth partely vnto prayer. For as sayncte James saieth. The contynuall prayer of a good man or a good woman maie dooe muche: and parte vnto the example of liuyng. whiche thyng saincte Peter thapostle sheweth, where he saieth: Lykewyse women, be you subiectes vnto your husbandes, that they that wyll not beleue the worde, maie be wonne without the worde, by their wyues conuersacion, whan they consyder your demeanour in holy feare. 1. Cor. 7. Iac. 5. 1. Pet 3.

¶ I haue red of many christen women, whiche by their meanes haue brought their husbandes vnto holy and vertuous liuynge: as Domitia, whiche amended hir husbande Flauius Clemens, kyns man vnto themperour Domician, & Clotildis wyfe vnto Clodouius the kyng of Fraunce: & Juguldis wife vnto Hermogillus the kynge of Gothia, & many other women mo. whiche haue brought their husbādes to good order and vertue.

Of chyldren and the charge and care about them. The. xi. Chap.

FIrste of all if thou beare no chyldren, take it with a patient and a content mynde, and in maner reioyse, that thou lackest that incredible peyne and busynesse. There is no place here to declare, what misery she must suffre, while she is great, what dolour and peryl, what she laboureth: Moreouer, what werinesse and care she hath in the nourishyng and bryngynge vp of them, leste they shuld waxe yll, or any myschortune bechaunce them: what contynuall feare she hath, whither they go, what they do, leste they do or take any harme. Verely I can not expresse the cause of this great desyre, that women haue to beare chyldren. Woldest thou be a mother? where to? That thou maist replenyshe the worlde, as who saye, the worlde coulde not be fylled, excepte thou bryngest forthe a lyttell beaste or two: or elles that God coulde not reyse chyldren vnto Abraham of these same stones. Be neuer carefull in the house of God, howe it shall be fylled: he wyll prouyde well inoughe for his howse, that it shall not be emptie. But peraduenture thou feareste the rebuke of barennesse. Thou art a chrysten woman: Therfore vnderstande, that nowe this saiynge is paste, Cursed be that woman in Israell that is bareyne. Thou lyuest nowe vnder a lawe, wherein thou seest virgynitee preferred aboue mariage: and hereste the saiynge of thy lorde: Woo be vnto women, that be great and beare chyldren, and blessed be they that be bareyn: Blessed be the wombes that beare not, and the breastes that gyue not sucke. Howe canste thou telle, whether God wyll haue the to be one of those happye and blessed women? Howe moche more shamefully

fully dydde the woman of Flaunders, whiche had be maryed almoste fifty yere, and neuer had chylde, and after that hir husbande was deade, maryed vnto an nother man, leyng onely for hir cause, to proue whether the faute was in hir selfe or in hir husbande, that shee had no chyldren. Wherfore she was worthye to beare a chylde with great peyne and werynes: and in hir labour to be delyuered of hir chylde, and hir lyfe bothe, with extreme turment. Howe be it I can not tel, whether she had any other cause to mary agayn, at the leaste wyse she layde that, whiche semed most honest in the eares of the foolysshe people. Perauenture thou woldest fayne see children comen of thyne owne body, shall they be of any other facion trowest thou than other children be? and thou hast chyldren of the citee, and also all other christen chyldren, whom thou maist beare motherly affection vnto. And thinke that they be all thyne. For so the lawe of mankynde dothe exhort the, and our faith commaundeth. Wherto haue you so great a desyre of chyldren you women? For yf the cares and sorowes, that chyldren cause vnto theyr mothers, were peincted you in a table, there is none of you so gredye of childerne, but she wolde be as sore afrayde of theim as of deathe: and shee that hathe any, wolde hate theim lyke cruell wylde beastes, or venemous serpentes. What ioye, or what pleasure canne be in chylderne? whyles they be yonge, there is nothynge but tediousnes, and whan they be elder, perpetuall feare what wayes they wyll take, if they be yll, euerlasting sorowe, and if thei be good, there is perpetuall care, least they shuld die, or some harme bechance them: and lest they shuld go awaie or be chaunged. What nede me to bynge in Octauia,

syster vnto Augustus for an exaumple: I wolde there were not so many exaumples, as there be, of suche as haue be made of welthy and fortunate mothers, myserable, and pyned awaie, and dyed for sorowe. Wore ouer, if thou haue many, than haste thou greatter care, wherethe vnthriftynesse of one shall wype awaye all the toye that thou haste of the reste. And this I meane by the sonnes.

¶ Nowe to speake of the doughters, what a turment of care is it to kepe theim? And in maryng them, what peyne shall she haue? Besyde this, that fewe fathers and mothers seeth good childzen of their owne. For very goodnesse, whiche is neuer withoute wysedome, cometh not but in discreete age. Plato calleth hym happye, that maie attayne in his laste age vnto wisedome and good lyfe. But whan the chyldzen be of that age, fathers and mothers be tourned to dust. O vnkynde woman, that dooest not reknowlage, how great a benefytte thou haste had of god, that eyther dydde neuer beare chyldzen, or els lost them before the tyme of sorowe: Wherfore Euripides saied ful well:

Sye that lacketh chyldzen,
Is happy of that misfortune.

¶ Therfore thou that beareste not, put not the faute of thy bareynnesse in thy husbande: for the faute is peraventure in thy selfe: whiche arte condemned to be bareyn, eyther by nature, or by the wyll of god. And greateste philosophers agree in this opinyon, that women beare no childzen, more longe of them selfe than of their husbandes. For nature neuer brought forthe but verye few baren men, and many women. And that vpon great consideracion, because there is more losse in the baren-

nes

nes of the man, than of the woman. For there cometh more increase in generacion by the man, than by the woman. Wherfore woman, if the barennes be in the, thou doteſt vngraciouſely in vayne: for there ſhall neuer man get the with chylde. And ſo thou conceyueſt many vngracious dedes in thy mynde, but thou ſhalte neuer conceyue any frute in thy wombe. And many tymes by the ryghtuous prouyſion of god, vnknowen vnto vs, there cometh none iſſue in mariage. For lyke as it is the gyft of god, that good chyldren be had, ſo it is his gift that any children be had at al. Therfore to ſeke any other remedy than by prayer, is not onely ſuperfluous, but alſo a curſed dede. Therfore aſke chyldren of god, and that good children. For if thou haue an yll chylde, it were better beare a ſnake, or a wolfe. Therfore aſke thou a chylde as Anna, wyfe vnto Helcane, dyd aſke: whiche by prayer, wepyng, and holy lyuynge optayned a ſonne, a prophet, and iudge in Iſraell, called Samuell: Lyke as the other Anne, wyfe vnto Joachim, whiche truſtynge holly in God, bare Mary the queene of the worlde, vnto mannes ſaluacion. Alſo Elyſabeth wyfe vnto Zachary, whiche had been bareyn, brought forth ſaynt John, the meſſanger of our lord, which gat many a chylde vnto Chriſte, aboue the whiche ſaynete John there was neuer man borne of woman.

1. Reg. 1.

Luc. 1.

Matth. 11.

Luc. 7.

Gene. 22.

¶ Our lorde gaue Iſaac the image of Chriſt, and the begynner of two great nacions of people, vnto Sara in hir olde age, which was not diſcontent with hir barennes, in that tyme, whan barennelle was reckened a great ſhame.

Iudic. 13.

¶ The aungell of our lorde ſhewed vnto the wyfe of Manna, a good and a chaſte woman, that Sampſon ſhulde

shulde be borne of hir, the iudge and delyuerer of Israell. Suche childzen doe they optayne, that so aske. For they that bee conceyued of synne and wyckednes can be nought els, but vngraciousnes. The woordes of
» the angell vnto Sampsons mother be these: Thou art
» bareyn, and without chyldzen, howe be it thou shalte
» conceiue and beare a sonne. Therfore se thou drinke nei
» ther wyne nor ale, nor eate any vnclene thyng. For thou
» shalte conceyue and beare a sonne, whose heed no ra-
» zer shall touche, for he shall be blessed of God frome
» his babes age, and frome the wombe of his mother,
» and shall begynne to deliuer Israell out of the handes of the Philistyns.

¶ These woordes putte me in remembzaunce nowe, to geue women with chylde warnynge, that so longe as they be great, thei neither eate so much to take surfet of, nor drynke to be drunke with. For many childzen haue afterwardes vsed the same thynges, that their mothers delited in, whan they were with chylde with them.

¶ Nowe for to declare, what diligence ought to be geuen to childzen, in the bryngyng vp of theim, were to longe to be comprehended in this boke, if I shuld teache euery thynge at large. wherof many counnyng men, bothe of olde tyme and late, haue written muche in bokes made purposely for the same matter. I will touche a fewe thynges, that me thynke pertayne vnto the dutie of a wyse housewyfe.

¶ Fyrste of all, let the mother reken hir childzen to be all hir treasure. There came vpon a tyme a great riche woman vnto Rome, oute of the countrey of Campania, whiche was hosted and lodged with the noble woman Cornelia, wyfe of Gracchus: There this ryche woman

woman shewed out hir great treasure vnto Cornelia, abundance of syluer and golde, riche raimentes, and precyouse stones: whiche whan Cornelia hadde prayed, than despyzed this woman of Campanie, that she wolde do soo moche agayne, as shewe hir treasure: Cornelia aunswered, that she wolde do so at nyghte. Nowe were her chyldren gone to schole, and were not yet come home. So at nyght whan the chyldren were come home, she shewed theym vnto this woman, and saied: These be my chiefe treasure.

¶ In other tyme a certayne woman of Ionia, made great bost and shewe of glorious clothes, of great price and goodly worke. Cornelia saied: This woman maketh great bost of hir clothes, but my foure sonnes, indued with all kynd of vertue, be vnto me in stede of precious clothes, with costly worke, and all tresure. Therfore in keppyng of this treasure, and increasyng it, there is no labour to be refused. Loue shall make all labour lyght and easye. Wherfore she shall nourishe them with hir owne mylke: and obey the commaundement of nature, whiche geuynge two breastes with mylke, vnto euery woman delyuered of chylde, semeth to crye and bid euery woman, that hath borne chylde, to keepe chylde, as other lyuynge creatures do. Also that wyse and lyberall mother of all thynge, Nature, all that bloudde, whiche went vnto the nourishement of the chylde, while it was in the mothers wombe, after that the chylde is borne, she sendeth it vp vnto the breastes, tourned into white mylke, to nourishe the chylde with al: neither forsaketh the tẽder babe, after that it is born, but norisheth with the same fode, wherof she hath made it. But I haue spoken inough of this mater in the boke afore. Afterwar

des,

des if the mother can skyll of lernynge, let hir teache hir lyttle childzen hir selfe, that they maie haue all one, bothe foz their mother, their nourise, and their teacher. And that thei maie loue hir also the mozе, and lerne with better courage and mozе spede, by the meanes of the loue, that their teacher hath towarde them.

¶ As foz hir doughters, she shall beside the lernynge of the boke, instructe them also with womens craftes, as to handle woll and flare, to spinne, to weaue, to sow, to rule and ouersee an house.

¶ Neither a vertuous mother ought to refuse lernyng on the boke, but now and than study and rede holy and wyse mens bokes, and though she do it not foz hir owne sake, at the least wyse foz hir childzen, that shee maie teache them, and make them good: As Erudice, whan she was of great age, sette hir selfe vnto lernynge, and study of philosophy, onely to thentent, that shee myght teache hir childzen, and so she dyd. Foz the babe first hereth hir mother, and firste begynneth to enfourme hir speche after hirs. Foz that age can dooe nothynge it selfe, but counterfayte and folowe other, and is counnyng in this thynge onely. She taketh hir firste conditions and informacion of mynde, by suche as shee hereth oz seeth by hir mother. Therfoze it lyeth mozе in the mother, than men wene, to make the conditions of the thyldzen. Foz she maie make them whether she wyl, very good, oz very badde. Nowe howe she shall make them good, I will geue a fewe shozt rules.

¶ Lette hir geue hir diligence, at least wise because of hir childzen, that she vse no rude and blounte speeche, lest that maner of speakyng take suche roote in the tender myndes of the childzen, and so grow and encrease toge-

together with their age, that they can not forgette it. Children will lerne no speeche better, nor more plainly expresse, than they wyll their mothers. For they wyll counterfet bothe the vertue and the vice, if any be in it.

¶ James the kyng of Aragone, after that he had won my countrey Valence, out of the handes of the Agarenes, whiche inhabyted the citee that tyme, he droue out the people, and commaunded men of Aragon, and women of Flerda to go dwelle in it. So the chyldren that came of theim bothe, with all their posterytee, kepte their mothers language: whiche we speake there vnto this daye. For the space of more than two hundred and .l. yere.

¶ Tyberius Gracchus, and Gayus Gracchus, were counted the moste eloquente men of Rome, and they lerned of their mother Cornelia, whose epistoles were red in the olde worlde, full of pure eloquence.

¶ Istrina, the queene of Scythia, wife vnto kyng Aripithis, taught hir son Syles, the greeke tongne. Also Plato commandeth, that nurces shal not vse to tell vnto children vayne and trifling fables.

¶ This same thyng is to be charged vnto the mothers tongne. For by the reson of suche bringynge vp: some after they be come to sadder age, haue suche childisshe and tender stomackes, that they can not abyde to here any thyng of wysedome or sadnes, but delyte all together in bokes of peuisshe fables, whiche neyther be true nor lykely. Therfore mothers shal haue redy at hande plesant histories and honest tales, of the cõmendacion of vertue, and rebukynges of vice. And lette the chylde here those fyrste: and whan it can not yet tell, what is good and what is bad, it shall begynne to loue vertue,

and hate vice: and so growe vp and ware with those opinions: and shal go about to be lyke vnto them whom he hath harde his mother commende, and vnlike vnto those, whome she hath dispraised.

¶ The mother shall reherse vnto theim the laudes of vertue, and the dispraise of vice, and repete often tymes to dryue them into the childrens remembraunce. I wold she shoulde haue some holy sayynges and preceptes of liuyng commenly in vse, whiche herde dyuers tymes, shall at the laste abyde in the chyldrens remembraunce, though thei geue no hede vnto them. For children renne vnto their mother, and aske hir aduise in all thyng: thei inquire euery thynge of hir: what some euer shee answereth, they beleue and regarde, and take it euen for the gospell.

¶ O mothers, what an occasion be you vnto your children, to make them whether you will, good or badde? Than shulde ryght and good, opinions, and the pure fayth of Chriſte be enfounded into their myndes, to dispise riches, power, honour, pompe, nobilitee, and beautie, and to recken them for vayne and foolisshe thynges: but iustice, deuocion, boldnes, continence, counnyng, mekenes, mercye, and charitee with mankynde, to reken these thynges goodlye, and woorthye to bee regarded and vsed: and to count theim the true and sure goodes. Neyther to haue in honour suche men, in whome those thynges be, that we spake of before, but in whome these be.

¶ What some euer shall bee spoken of any manne, or dooen wysely, wittily, or honestly, lette hir prayse it vnto theim. And what someuer any man hath dooen lewdly, subtilly, falsely, shamfully, wickedly, vngraciously,

lye,

ly, rebuke that sore.

¶ Whan she embraceth hir chylde and kysseth it, and wyll praye it some good lucke, let hir not praye of this facion: God make the rycher than euer was Cresus or Crassus: god make the more honourable, than euer was Pompeius or Cesar: god make the more fortunate than euer was Augustus. But let hir praie on this facion: Chryste geue the grace to be good and continent, and to dispise fortune of the world, to be vertuous, and to folowe his steppes, to do after saint Paule, and make the more iuste than euer was Cato, holyer than Socrates or Seneca, more counnynge than Plato or Aristotle, or more eloquent than Demosthenes or Tullius. These let hir reken for great thynges, and to be desired. These let hir seke and wisshe for, that wolde praie for good thynges.

¶ Let the mother neuer laugh at any worde or dede of ỹ childe, dooen lewdely, shamfully, noughtly, wantonly or piertly, nor kysse it therfore. For children wyll lyghtly vse theim selfe vnto suche thynges, as they se be plesaunte and delectable vnto their father and mother: nor wyll not loue theim, after they be comen to mannes or womans estate. Therfore the mother shal correct the chylde for suche doyng: and let it knowe, that it neither doth well, nor she is not content therwith. And agayn on the other syde, let hir embrace and kysse it, whan so euer it dooeth any thynge that is a sygne of goodnes.

¶ The stoicke, philosophers saie, that there be certain fyers or seedes, whether you wil call them, breddе by nature in vs, of the same iustice, in the which ỹ fyrste father of mankynde was made by almightie god: that littell fyer, if it myght encrease in vs, wold bryng vs vp vn-

to the perfection of vertue, and blessed liuyng. But it is drowned with corrupte opinions and iudgementes. And whan it begynneth to lyght and flame vp a littel, it dothe not only lacke nourisshement, but also is quenched with contrary blastes of wynde. Fathers and mothers, nurses, scoole maisters, kynsfolkes, frendes, acquaintaunce, and the commen people, whiche is a maister of great errour, all these do that they can to plucke vppe those seedes of vertue by the rootes, and to ouer whelme that littell fyre, as soone as it beginneth to appere. But all they regarde ryches muche, and geue honoure vnto nobilitee, and reuerence vnto honour, and seke for power, and praise beautee, and worship pompe, and folowe pleasures. But they trede pouertee vnder foote, and mocke simple mindes. They suspecte deuocion, and hate connynge: and all kynde of vertue they call folly. And whan someuer they praie for any thyng, they wisshe for those that I spake of before. But if any body ones name these other thinges, they abhorre theim as vnlucky sygnes. And therfore these lye vnder fete, and be despised. Neither any man applieth him self vnto them: but those other thynges be in regarde & price: and all men renneth vnto theim. For wherof I praye you cometh this, that wee haue so many lewde felowes and fooles, and so fewe good and wyse men: whan that the good nature of mankynde is more inclined of it owne selfe vnto vertue, than vice.

¶ Therfore a good wife shall withstand these corrupted opinions, with other better, and more meete for Christen folkes: and shall nourishe vp in hir children that littell fyre, that I spake of before: and water those seedes with the droppes of good teachynge, that the fire

maie

maie rise vp vnto great lyght, and the sedes vnto much and good corne.

¶Let hir not breake the strength bothe of their bodies their wittes, and vertue, with wanton and deinty bringing vp. I haue seene very few men come to great proffe of eyther lernyng, witte, or vertue, that had been dayntly brought vp. Neither the bodies can come vnto their due strength, whan thei be febled with delicate keppyng. And so whan mothers wene thei saue their children, they lese theim: and whan they go about to keepe theim in helth and strength, they foolishely minisshe bothe their helth and their lyke.

¶Let theim loue their children well, as conuenient is, and spare not. For who wolde either adnull or dispreise the lawe of nature? Or what a cruelnes is it, not to loue theim that thou hast borne? But yet let them hyde their loue, lest the children take boldnes therupon, to doo what they lyste.

¶Nor lette not loue stoppe hir to punisshe hir children for their vices, and to strength their bodyes and wyttes with sadde bryngynge vp. For you mothers be the cause of moste parte of vices amonge folkes: wherby you maie see howe muche your children are beholdynge vnto you, whiche induce naughtie opinions into theim with your foly. For you haue the bryngyng vp of them: and you alowe their vnthriftynes. And whan they be goynge vnto hygh vertue, and abhorre the ryches of the worlde, and the pompe of the diuell: you with your weepyng, and sharpe rebukynge, calle them backe agayn into the diuelles snares: because you had leauer see them ryche than good.

¶Agrippina, mother vnto themperour Nero, whan

she had asked south sayers of hir sonne, whether he shulde be emperour, yea saied they, but he shall kyll his mother: Let hym kyll hir (saied she) so that he maie be emperour. And so he bothe was emperour, and kylled hir. But whan it came to the poynt, Agrippina wolde not gladly haue been kylled, and repented that hir son had the empyre.

¶ Fynally you, through your cherisshynge, wyll neyther let them take labour to lerne vertue: and haue a pleasure to kylle theim full of vyces with delicateneg. Therfore many of you wepe and waile (for I speke not of all) and be well punisshed and worthily in this lyke for your madnes. Whan you be sory to se your children suche as your selfe haue made them. Nor you be not loued of them agayne, whan they perceiue them selfe vnloued of all other for your loue.

¶ There is a certayne tale of a ponge man, whiche whan he was led to be put to deth, desired to speke with his mother: and whan she came, layde his mouthe to hir eare, and bote it of. And whan the people that were by, rebuked hym, callyng hym not onely a theefe, but also cursed, for so entreatyng his mother, he aunswered agayne: This is the rewarde for hir bryngynge vp. For if she (saied he) had corrected me for stealynge my felowes boke out of the schoole, whiche was my fyrste thefte: than had I not proceded vnto these myscheuous deedes. But she cherisshed me, and kyssed me, for my doyng.

¶ Nowe wherto shulde I reherse the madnes of those mothers, that loue better those children, that be foule, croked, leude, dullardes, sluggardes, dronkerdes, vnruly, and foolysshe, than those, that bee fayre, vp-

rpght

ryght, counnyng, quycke wytted, inuentyue, sobre, tretable, quiet, and wyse: whether is this an errour of folkes myndes, or a punissement of god deserued for their syns, to make theim to loue suche thynges as be woorthy no loue? Dumme beastes cherysshe euer the fayrest of their whelpes, or bydes: and lyghtly it is a sygne of good proffe in theim, whan the dammes make muche of theim. Also hunters knowe that that shalbe the beste dogge, whiche the damme is moste busye aboute, and for whome she careth the most, and carieth firste in to hir litter. But in mankynde that is the moste vyle and the least woorthe, that the mother loueth moste tenderly.

¶ If you wyll be loued in deede of your chyldren, and specially in that age, whan they knowe what is true and holy loue, than make them not to loue you ouer muche whan they knowe not yet what loue is: but set more by a spice cake, a hony combe, or a pece of sugar, than by both father and mother. No mother loued hir childe better than myne dyd me, neither any childe dyd euer lesse perceyue hym selfe loued of his mother than I. She neuer lyghtly laughed vpon me, shee neuer cokered me: and yet whan I had been. iii. or. iiii. daies out of hir house, that she wyst not where, she was almoste sore sycke. And whan I was comen home, I coulde not perceyue that euer she longed for me. Therfore was there no body, that I more fled, or was more lothe to come nyghe, than my mother, whan I was a childe. But after I came to ponge mans estate, there was no body, whome I delyted more to haue in syght. whose memory nowe I haue in reuerence, and as oft as shee cometh to my remembraunce, I embrace hir within

within my mynde and thought, whan I can not with my bodye.

¶ I had a frende at Paris, a very wel lerned man, whiche amonge other great benefites of god, reckned this for one: that his mother was deade, that cherisshed him so wonderously: whiche (said he) if she had liued, I had neuer come to Paris to lerne: But had syt styl at home all my life, amonge dicing, drabbes, delicates, and pleasures, as I begonne. Howe coulde this man loue his mother, that was so glad of hir deathe? But a wyse mother shall not wysshe for pleasures vnto hir chylde, but vertue? Nor for ryches, but for counnynge and good fame. And rather for an honest death, than for an vncomely lyfe.

¶ The women of Lacedemon had leauer their sonnes shulde die honestlye, for the defence of their countrey, than flee to saue their lyues. And wee rede in histories, that many of them haue kylled with their owne handes their sonnes, that were cowardes and dastardes, pronouncyng these wordes,

This was neuer my sonne,
Nor borne in Lacedemone.

¶ Sophia, whiche had. iii. goodly daughters, named the with. iii. names of vertu, Hope, Faith, and Charitee, and was very glad to se them all dye for the honour of Christe, and buried them in hir owne selfe, not farre frome Rome, in the tyme of Hadryan themperour.

¶ Lette not the mothers bee so dilygent in teachynge theyr chyldren craftes to gette good by, as to make them vertuous. Neither shal bydde theim take example of such as haue gathered muche goodes, in short space: but rather of suche as haue comen vnto great vertue

and

and goodnes.

¶ The people of Megara is dispraised, and not without a cause, for teachyng theyr children nigardschippe and couetyse: and in stede of honest children, made them sparynge bonde men. Wherfore they caused suche thinges, as we see chaunceth nowe adaies, that with byddynge theim so ofte, seke for good, gette good, encrease theyr good, and gather good by all meanes, they caused theyr children to doo mischiefe and vngracious dedes. The whiche faulte is a great parte in the fathers and mothers, whiche be counsailours, causers, and setters vpon: and as good reason was, whan the children coulde fynde none other waies to come by ryches, they robbed theyr fathers and mothers. And if thei sawe that all was so well and closely laied vppe, that they coulde not come by it, than begunne they to hate theyr fathers and mothers, and wysshe for theyr deathes, and seke meanes to rydde theim awaie. And it is plainely knowen, that many haue poysoned theyr fathers and mothers, because they thought to longe, to tarye tyll they dyed for age.

¶ Often tymes they rebuke their fathers and mothers of theyr owne vyces, as thoughe they had learned them by theyr exaumple or negligence. For the vnthriftie ponge man, whiche hadde an vnthriftie father, saied of this facyon: I wyll impute myne vnthriftynes vnto my father. For I was not brought vp with sadde demeanour, neyther vnder the lawe of a well ordred house, whiche moughte haue instructed my maners better, and pluckedme frome those vices, that myne age was inclined to. But whan that fyrste age of children ought to bee holden vnder, and kepte in by sadde ordrynge,

leste it fall vnto vice, through ouer muche libertee, from whiche it will bee harde to plucke theym againe, and as the wyse man counsaileth, neuer haue the rodde of the boyes backes: than specially the daughters shulde be handeled without any cherysshyng. For cherysshyng marreth the sonnes, but it vtterly destroyeth the daughters. And men be made worse with ouer muche lybertee, but the women be made vtterly naughte. For they be so set vpon pleasures and fantasyes, that excepte thei be well bridled and kepte vnder, they renne on heade in to a thousande myschieffes. Nowe howe the daughters oughte to bee broughte vp, I haue shewed in the boke afore. Therfore the mother shall reade it, bothe because there bee many thynges perteignyng vnto maried women, and because it is the mothers duetie, to see that hir daughters do that we teache there.

¶ And whan the mothers haue prouyded as well as they can by wordes, that no foule, vncomely, or vnclenly thynge, or ieoperdous, or vngracious abyde in the chyldes mynde, than shall they prouyde mooste of all, bothe by example, and dedes, that the childe se nothing, whiche can not bee counterfeted and folowed without shame. For as I saied before, that age is euen almost lyke an ape, and dothe nothynge of it selfe, but all by counterfetyng of other. And thoughe the fathers and mothers by their auctorite and loue, and also commaundement, put the yll examples of other folkes out of the chyldrens mindes, yet they can not rebuke that they dooe them selfe: or though they wolde rebuke it, yet wyll not chyldrene bee so muche moued with that, that they heare, as with that, that thei se. wherfore the poet Iuuenall saieth full well, that the examples of fathers

and

and mothers, maie do moze, than a great deale of warnynge and teachynge, of a great sozte of maisters: foz they shall do them moze hurte by the example of one yl dede, than they haue dooen theim good by muche holy counsailyng. And therfoze the afoze saied poet counsaileth wisely in the .xiiii. Satyze on this maner:

Let nothyng, that is filthy to speake oz see,
Come nere those doozes, wherin children be.
Awaie with songes of baudes, wenches lyght,
And shoffyng iauels, that walken all nyght.
Thou shuldest geue children great reuerence,
If thou go about any inconuenience.
Noz set at lyght a chyldes yeres and age,
But whan thou fallest in to outrage:
Yet foz thy littell childe, whiche is in syght,
Refrayne that foule acte with all thy myght.

¶ Celius Plinius dispzeiseth Numidia Quadzantilla, because she kepte and cherisshed players and iesters, moze than was conuenyent foz a noble woman. Not withstandyng he commendeth the olde womans wisedom e in this poynt, because she wolde not suffre hir Neuewe Quadzatus, to loke vpon hir players, neyther within hir house, noz in the cõmon playyng place. And whan so euer she wolde here theim, oz was aboute to take hir pastyme in playynge at the chesses, shee vsed to commaunde hir neuewe to go his waie, and study his boke.

¶ The same afozesaied Plinius geueth great thankes by a letter vnto Hispula his wifes aunte, because shee had bzought vp and instructed his wyfe with good lernynge, whiche neuer sawe any thyng in hir auntes house, but honestie and vertues. And no doute, muche moze diligence ought to be geuen about the doughters

that nothyng blotte their demurenes, chastitee, or sadnes, because these thynges be required more perfecte in a woman than a man. And the females in all kyndes of beastes dooe folowe exaumple moste wittily, and euer more redily and more perfectly the vyces, whiche thynge the male dooeth also. Wherfore she wyl lightly do that whiche she seeth hir mother do, or any other woman that she seeth regarded of folkes. Neyther she can refrayne hir selfe, if shee haue their example for auctoritee. Wherfore in such countreis, where the noble and gentle women be badde, there be but fewe of the lowe degree and comminaltee good. And than they that bee brought vp of yl women, be not lightly any other them selfe. Howe be it, the doughter resembleth not so muche hir mother, as hir that hath brought and norisshed hir vp. Wherfore many bastardes, which haue ben brought vp with their graundmothers on the fathers syde, beyng vertuous women, haue gone out of theyr mothers kynde, and folowed the lyfe and holynes of their granmothers that nourisshed them.

¶ Cato, thelder banisshed Gaius Manlius out of the senate house, because he kysſed his owne wyfe, his daughter beynge by. For that ignorant age vnderstandeth not, wherfore euery thynge is doen, but it wyll represent the same actes. lyke as a glasse representeth the factions of bodyes, sette before it, but not in the same condicion. Whiche thynge the moste wyse and holye man Eleazar, vnderstandynge, whan he was
1.Mac.6. commaunded by the statute of kynge Antiochus, to eate swynes flesshe, and refused it, and was counsailed by pagannes that were his frendes, at leaste wyse to make countenaunce, as though he dyd eate it, that he

myght

mpght vnder that coloure escape, as thoughe he had obeyed the kynges wyll, he made aunswere: that he had leauer dye, than dooe any thyng that mpght geue yll exaumple to ponge folkes, aud spake vnto theim in these woozdes. Foz it is not conuenient noz comely foz mpne age, to vse any symulacion, that ponge men maie suspecte Eleazar, whiche nowe is paste. lxxx. yeres and tenne of age, is tourned vnto the lyfe of alyantes and infidels: and so they by the meanes of my simulacion, and foz a littell space of this cozruptible lyfe, shall bee discpued: and by that meanes shall I gette a shame and curse vnto mpne olde age. Foz though I scape the punisshement of men, at this pzesent tyme: yet shall I not scape the handes of almightie god, neyther quycke noz deade. Wherfoze I wyl do as is semyng mpne age, dye boldly, and leaue an example of noble stomake vnto ponge men, whan I shall take an honest dethe with a redy and bolde mynde, foz the moste holye and vertuous lawes.

¶ As soone as this was saied, he was streyght caryed vnto execucion, and they that led hym, which were moze fauourable to hym befoze, were than displeased, foz the woozdes that he had spoken, whiche thei thought that he had saied of pzesumpcion, but whan he was nyghe beaten to death, he cryed out and saied: Lozde, thou that hast holy knowlage, thou knowest playnely, that whan I mpght haue been delyuered from deathe, yet I suffre harde peynes of my body: and I suffre them gladly with all mpne herte, foz dzeade of the. And so he departed awaie, leauyng a memoziall of his deathe, foz an exaumple of vertue and boldenes, not only vnto ponge men, but vnto al his nacion. Therfoze the sonnes shuld

be enfoꝛmed and taught with example of their fathers: Neither there ought any thyng to be ſhewed vnto them, that maie be turned lyghtly vnto vice, leſt they tourne it moꝛe lyghtly, bothe by the reaſon of their owne ignorance, and by reaſon of mans nature, whiche is inclined vnto the woꝛſe.

1.Reg.2. ¶ Our loꝛde puniſſhed Hely, the iudge and biſſhoppe of Iſraell, not becauſe he gaue an yll exaumple vnto his ſonnes Ophini and Phinees, but becauſe he dyd not puniſſhe his yll and vngracioule ſonnes, Thereꝛoꝛe he peryſſhed with a fall out of his chayꝛe, and the heꝛytage of his benefyce was geuen awaie vnto a nother kynred.

¶ Nowe howe muche moꝛe greuous vengeaunce wyll he take vpon ſuche fathers, as teache their childꝛen eyther by counſayle, oꝛ by their exaumple, to lyue vngracioully: And ſeeyng that the puniſſhement of the ſonnes, whiche were adulterars, redounded vnto the father, becauſe he dyd not pꝛohybit theim, as muche as laye in hym: what ſhall he dooe to ſuche fathers, that excite and moue their childꝛen vnto lechery, pleaſures, and vngracious actes, either with wooꝛdes, oꝛ els with deedes? And on the other ſyde, of the woman that accuſtometh hir childꝛen vnto vertue, the maiſter of the pa-

1.Timo.2. gannes ſaynct Paule, ſpeaketh in this maner: The woman hathe gone out of the waie by tranſgreſſion, howe beeit ſhe ſhall be ſaued by bꝛyngyng fooꝛthe of chyldꝛen, if ſhe continue in faythe, charitee, and holynes with chaſtitee.

Of

Of twyse maried women and stepmothers.
The. xii. Chapiter.

SUche as marye againe, after the deathe of theyr fyrste husbandes, beside all that we haue wrytte here before, muste bee warned this thing, to take heede, leste they displease theyr housbandes, whiche they haue, with ouer muche rehersynge of theyr fyrste housbandes. The condicion of the worlde is suche, that euer folkes recken thynges paste, better than thynges that be presente. The cause whye is, because no felicitee is so great, but it hath muche displeasure and bytternes myngled with it: whiche so longe as it is present, greueth vs sore, but whan it is ones gone, it leaueth no greatte felynge of it selfe behynde it: and for that cause we seeme the lesse troubled with sorowes paste, than with sorowes present. Also age renneth on a pace, whiche maie euerie daie worse than other suffre displeasure, and is more feble to susteigne casualtees chaunsyng. Moreouer the remembraunce of the fourther and more lustie age, and as it were a comparyson of it with the more paynefull age, causeth great werynes of the present state, and longynge for that whiche is past. But Salomon woulde not haue suche thoughtes to come into the mynde of a wyse man, for to recken the yeres past better than the yeres present. Neyther a wise woman oughte to counte or recken hir housbande, whiche is deade, better than hym, whiche she hath on lyue. For they bee ofte disceyued in this poynte, because if any thynge dislyke theim in theyr husbande, whome they haue, than calle they to remembraunce onely suche poyntes as pleased theym in theyr fyrste husbandes. And that thynge they dooe the more spiteously, if theyr

present

pzesent husbande discontente theyr mynde in those thinges, wherin theyr fyrst husbandes dyd theim pleasure. Than without all consideracion of other thynges, they compare theyr husbandes togyther onely in that: and there vpon ryseth peyne, whynyng, and troublous wordes, againste theyr husbandes. And whyles they bewayle and complaine the mysse of their deade husband, they kepe nother.

¶As for stepmothers they haue an yll name, as malycious towarde theyr husbandes chyldzene: of the whiche thing there be many examples in memorie. Therfore women muste be warned ofte, to rule theyr owne braydes and fantasyes of mynde: for thereof cometh the fountayne and begynnynge of all bothe yll and good. And if thou suffre thy braydes to rule the, they wyll brynge vpon the a great numbre of troubles and miseries, whiche afterwardes thou shalte not lyghtely shake of. But if thou rule theim, than shalte thou lyue holily and fortunatly. And that thyng thou shalte obteine, if thou wylte studie diligently, whyles thy minde is at reste and quietnes, howe thou mayste behaue thy selfe, whan causes of motion and trouble come vpon the. Therfore stepmothers be not rough and vnreasonable, sauyng suche, whose passions and braydes of mynde plateth the tyrannes ouer theym: and they dooe not rule theyr braydes, but folowe and serue them. For she that is ledde with discretion, reason, and consideracion, shall recken hir selfe and hir husbande all one. And therefore she shall counte bothe his chyldzen and hirs common to them bothe. For if Frendshyp make all thyng common amonge frendes, in so muche that many haue loued and fauoured theyr frendes chyldzene as

their

theyr owne: howe muche more abundantly and perfectly ought wedlocke to cause the same, whiche is the hyghest degree, not onely of all frendshyppes, but also of all bloude and kynred.

¶ Moreouer, she oughte to haue compassion of theyr tendre and weake age, in remembraunce of hir owne. For if she haue childzen, she shall loue, others to, remembryng that the chaunce of the worlde is in differente, and that hir chyldzene shall fynde suche fauoure of other folkes, whether she die or lyue, as she hath shewed to other folkes childzene. And in deede a good woman will bee vnto hir husbandes chyldzene that, whiche she maie heare theim call hir so often, that is mother. For what woman is so farre out of all humanitee and gentilnes, that wyll not bee moued and mytygated with this woorde, mother, of whome so euer it is saied? And specially of childzene, whiche can not flatter, but speake so euen with theyr stomacke, lyke as they woulde theyr owne mother, of whome they were borne: Howe swete is the name of Frendshyp? Howe manye displeasures and hatredes dothe it put awaie? Than, howe muche more effectuall oughte the name of mother to bee, whiche is full of incredible charitee? Thou mooste irefull woman, doest thou not mollifie, whan thou heatest thy selfe named mother? Thou arte more ragious than any wylde beaste, if that name wyll not sterre the. For there is no beaste so ragious and cruell, but if an other ponge of hir owne kynde, faune vpon hir, she will be by and by mylde vnto it. And thy husbandes chyldzene can not make the gentyll and mylde with sweete woordes. Thou arte called mother, and shewest thy selfe an ennemy. Thou many tymes gathering hate with-

out cause, vsette it vpon that weake and innocent age. And whan it were conueniente, that all Christen men shulde be as bretherne to the, in beneuolence and charitee, thou hatest those, that be coniuigned vnto the in house and bloude, and that be brethern vnto thy childzen. It is meruaile, that the soule of theyr mother doth not pursue the, vexe and trouble the. Dooe you vnderstande, you stepmothers that be suche, that your vnruly ire and hate cometh but of the dzeames of your owne foly? For why dooe not stepfathers hate theyr wyues childzen in lyke maner? For there is no stepfather, but he loueth his wiues son as well as his owne.

¶ I haue reade of many stepfathers, that haue geuen the inheritaunce of realmes vnto their wyues sonnes, euen as they had been theyr owne, as Augustus lefte themppze of Rome vnto Tyberius, and Claudius vnto Nero: And yet had Augustus chyldezs chyldzen, and chyldzen of theim againe: And Claudius had a sonne. Whiche thynge they dydde not for lacke of knowlage, that they were not theyr owne sonnes, but because they perceiued in reason and consyderacion, that there was no cause of hate betwene stepfathers and steppe sonnes except theyr owne condicions dyd cause it. For what offence hath stepsonnes made vnto theyr stepfathers, excepte they haue offended theym because they were not theyr owne sonnes. As for that thynge laie in goddes handes, and not in mans power.

¶ Yea but some wolde saie, the stepfathers do not plaie and trifle with theyr stepsonnes, as theyr mothers wold. To make answere there vnto, by that argumente theyr naturall fathers do not loue theim. But wherto shulde I saie any thyng of the stepfathers loue, whan there be

some mothers so madde, that they wene theyr housbandes loue not theyr owne naturall childzen, because they do not tryfle and foole with theim all the daie and al the nyght tyl, as theim selfe doth. The man can not dote as the woman can. For that same stronge stomacke of man can holde and couer loue well enoughe, and ruleth it, and dooeth not obey it. But you stepmothers, whye do not you euer kysse, combe, and pyke your stepchyldzen as you do your owne: there is so great darknes of misty fantasies in your myndes, that what so euer you loue, you thynke euery body shulde loue the same, and that no man loueth that enough: and what so euer you hate, you thynke is woozthy to be hated of euery man, and that euery body loueth that to muche. And some there be, whiche whan they hate their stepsonnes deadly, yet they swere they loue them: which be madde, and if they beleue, that any man will beleue theim: And yet they bee moze madde, if they weene to disceyue god. Doest thou loke after, that Chzistе shulde here the, whan thou calleste hym father, whan thou wzythyest awaie frome thy steppe chyldzen, callynge the mother? Sayncte Johan the apostell doth not beleue that any suche doth loue the inuisible god, that hateth his bzother whome he loketh vpon.

Howe she shall behaue hir selfe with hir kinsefolkes and alyance. The. xiii. Chap.

The great lerned man Nigidius Figulus saieth, the deryuacion and sygnificacion of syster, is as thoughe I wolde saye, separate and goynge asyde, because she is separate and goeth in to an other house and kynred. Whiche thynge seyng it is so, the woman

that is maryed shall begynne to bee more scrupsable vnto hir alyance, than to hir kynsefolkes, and so it is conuenient for many causes. Fyrste, because she is as it were shifted and planted in to that kyn, vnto which she shall beare chyldren, and the which she shal multiply with hir tempng. Secondly because she hath the beneuolence and loue of hir owne kynsefolkes all redye. Therfore she must seeke for the loue of hir alyaunce afterwardes. Thyrdlye, that hir childzen maie haue the more loue of their fathers kynred, whan they shall bee holpen not onely with the beneuolence of their father but also of their mother. And in shorte conclusion, it shall be cause of many pleasures, if thou be loued of thyne aliance, and many displeasures, if thou be hated. And this was the thynge that those men loked after, whiche skyfted mariage out of kynred in to other folkes, that loue and frendeshyp amonge people myghte spreade the broder. Therfore it is conuenient, diligently to get the loue of thyne alyance, or if thou haue it all redy, to kepe and holde it.

¶ It is saied, that mothers in law beare a stepmothers hate vnto their doughters in lawe. And agayn, doughters in lawe bere no great loue and charitee towarde their mothers in lawe. Therfore Terence, after the common custome and opinion of people, saieth: All mothers in lawes hate their doughter in lawes. And there was a merye woman, the whiche whan she sawe hir mother in lawes ymage made in sugare, shee saied, it was bitter.

¶ Plutarche, and sayncte Hieronime takyng of his auctoritee, where he wryteth agaynste Jouinian, telleth, that it was an olde custome in Leptis, a citee of

Affryke

Affryke, that a newe maried wyfe, on the nexte daye after hir maryage, shuld come vnto hir mother in lawe, and praie hir to lende hir a potte: and she shulde saie she had none: to thentent that the yong wife might knowe by and by after hir maryage the stepmotherly hate of hir mother in lawe, and be lesse greued afterwardes, if any thynge bechanced that she wolde not.

¶ But whan I consider the cause of this enmitee, me thynke bothe their enuies very foolysshe. For the man standethe as it were in the myddes betwene his mother and his wyfe: and so eyther of theim hateth other, as an expulser of hir self. The mother is discontent, that all hir sonnes loue shulde be turned vnto hir doughter in lawe: and the wife can not suffre any to be loued, but hir selfe. And therof ryseth hate, enuy, and braulyng, as it were betwene two dogges, if a man stryke and cherysshe the one, the other beyng bye.

¶ Pythagoras scholers in olde tyme, and those that were of his secte, dyd not recken Frendship minisshed, the mo that come vnto it: but to be the more encreased and strengthed: so the mother ought not to thynke hir selfe a mother euer the lesse, if hir sonne marye a wyfe: nor the wyfe ought to counte hir selfe a wyfe the lesse, if she haue a mother in law, but rather either of thē ought to reconsyle the one vnto the other, if any discorde chaunce betwene theim.

¶ Thou foolisshe mother in lawe woldeste thou not haue thy sonne to loue his wyfe, whiche is a companion and frende inseparable: Coudeste thou haue suffered, not to haue been loued of thyne owne husbande: what greatter misery canste thou wisshe vnto thy son, than for to dwell with his wyfe with displeasure? And

thou foolisshe doughter in law, woldest not thou haue thy husbande to loue his mother? dooest not thou loue thy mother? Thou shalte be loued of thy husbande, as his felowe and dere mate: and thy husbande shall loue his mother, as vnto whome he is bounde, for his lyfe, his norisshynge, and his bringynge vp: and therfore he oweth great loue and kyndenes. The doughter in lawe, knowynge that hir husbande and she is all one, shall recken hir husbandes mother hir owne, and shall loue hir and reuerence hir no lesse than hir naturall mother, but be more seruisable vnto hir, that she maie hynde hir the more to loue hir. She shall not be displeased, if hir husbande loue his mother, but rather, (beynge a good and a vertuous woman) if she see, he dooeth not behaue hym selfe vnto his mother accordynge lyke she shall exhorte hym, and desyre hym to behaue hym selfe as a sonne ought vnto his mother. There is no mother in lawe so out of reason, but she wyll be the better content, if shee knowe hir doughter in lawe chaste, and louyng to hir husbande. Agrippyna, nere vnto Augustus themperour by his doughter Julia, whiche was maryed vnto Germanicus, neuewe vnto Liuia, themperesse, by hir sonne Drusus, was hated of Liuia, bothe as a doughter in lawe, and as a stepdoughter, and was of hir owne nature bothe sharpe and shrewde enough: but she was so chaste of body, and so louynge vnto hir husbande, that with those two vertues she altered the fyerce mynde of hir mother in lawe Liuia, and tourned it to good.

¶ The doughters in lawe ought to nourisshe and sustayne their mothers in lawe in their necessitee, none other wyse, than if they were they? owne mothers.

Ruth,

Ruthe, a Moabite borne, lefte hir countrey and all hir kynne, for hir mother in lawe, because she woulde not leaue the olde myserable woman in sorowe and heauynes. Therfore she bothe comforted hir with woordes, and nourysshed and founde hir with hir laboure, and in all condicions fulfylled the roume of a daughter. Neyther that same greatte charitee of Ruthe lacked rewarde. For by the counsaile and helpe of hir mother in lawe, she gate Booz vnto hir husbande, a great ryche man, and bare Isai the prophet, and was graundmother to kynge Dauid, of whose stocke our lorde Christ was borne. Ruth. 1.2. et.3.

¶ Howe she shall lyue with hir son or hir daughter maried, and howe with hir sonne in lawe and daughter in lawe. The. xiiii. Chapiter.

AS it is conuenient for the wyfe to applye hir selfe vnto hir housbandes discrecion and wyll in all other thynges: so whan anye of hir chyldrene shall bee maryed, and that bothe Aristotle in the secounde boke of house kepynge, teacheth, and reason byddeth, that the holle auctoritee ouer the chyldrene shoulde bee geuen to the fathers. So by the lawes of Rome, children were not vnder the mothers rule but the fathers, and that so longe as he lyued, thoughe they were maryed, and of great age, excepte they were at theyr owne lybertee.

¶ Nowe howe great power oughte fathers to haue ouer theyr owne chyldren, whan god woulde that Joseph shoulde haue some auctoritee ouer Christe? The angell of our lorde, what tyme he shewed vnto Josephe in his dreame, that that, whiche was in the wombe of Mary, was

was not conceyued by mans generacion, but by the power and woorke of the holy goste: She shall (saied he) beare a sonne, and thou shalte calle his name Jesus. He saied not shee shall beare the a sonne, as the vse is to saie to the owne fathers. For women beare chyldrene vnto theyr husbandes: and yet he saied, thou shalte calle hym. Whereby he signified the power and auctoritee of hym, whiche was his father apparente, whan he had saied vnto the virgine, His name shall be called Jesus.

Matt. 1.

¶ A wyse woman shall not pursue hir daughter in lawe, nor wene that shee wynneth loue with hatynge hir, neyther of hir nor of hir sonne. If she loue hir, and geue hir good counsaile, and teache hir, And if she do afore hir suche thinges as maie be example vnto hir daughter in lawe, bothe of chastitee and sobernes, And if she make no discorde betwene the maried couples, but if any chaunce betwene them by reason of other, auoyde it, and reconsyle them againe with all hir myghte: Fynally, if shee beare a motherlye affection towarde hir daughter in lawe, she shall lyghtly brynge to passe, that bothe hir sonne shall bee more bounde vnto hir, and shal optaine great loue and reuerence of hir daughter in lawe. For howe muche more shall he loue hir, of whom, he hath been borne, and by whom he hath his wyfe, both more chaste and sobre, and better agreeynge with hym, where by he shall be bounde vnto hir, not onely for that benefite, that she is his mother, but also because she hath been the instructrice of his wyfe and causer of a great parte of his felicitee.

¶ And the daughter in lawe on hir parte shall beare none other mynde, vnto hir mother in lawe, than if she

if she were hir owne mother, by whome she hath bothe gotten moze knowlage, and is made better, and hath hir husbande moze pleasaunt and louynge vnto hir. And in a sharpe and a rygorous mother in law all thing chaunceth contrary.

¶ As for the daughter, that is maryed, the mother shall not desyre to haue so muche hir owne, as whan she was a mayde, but remembre that than she is shifted into an other house and kynred, to encrease that stocke: but she maie geue hir good counsaile, or putte hir in remembraunce, whan she is maryed, of suche counsailes, as she gaue hir, whan she was vnmaryed: but she shall not medle with hir in suche poyntes, as she thynketh will displease hir sonne in lawe. She shall not leade hir to churches, nor bringe hir home, nor speake to hir, if she thynke it be againste hir son in lawes wyll.

¶ Neyther leat any foolyshe woman saie to me on this maner: What, maie I not speake to myne owne daughter? She is thy daughter in deede, but nowe she is not thy woman. For what so euer ryght thou haddest to hir thou haste geuen it ouer to thy sonne in lawe. Therfore and thou loue thy daughter, and woldest se hir happie, that is to saie, liue in concorde with hir husbande, exhorte hir alwaie, and geue hir counsaile to obey hir husbande in euery poynte, nor leat hir ones speake with the without he wyll geue hir leaue. For who so euer will haue moze lybertee with a mans wyfe, than the husbande will suffre, is and auoulterer. And who so euer toucheth any thynge of an other mans againste the owners wyll, is a theke.

¶ She shall loue hir son in lawe none other wyse than hir owne sonne: but yet she shall reuerence hym moze

than hir owne son. For a woman ought not to thynke, that she mate be as homely ouer hir son in lawe, as hir own son: but she shall desire his welfare as much as hir owne son, and geue him as good counsaile and exhortacion: but yet in such maner, that she mate seme rather to exhort and require hym, than byd and commaunde him.

Of a wyse well worne in age. The. xv. Chap.

A wyse well shotte in age, shall doue as philosophers saie the byrde of Egypte dothe, whiche whan it is olde, purgeth all the fylthy humours of hir bodye with spices of Araby, and sendeth forthe of hir mouth a wonderous swete brethe: so a woman, whan she is past the pleasure of the body, and hath done with bearynge and bryngyng vp of childzen, than shall she sauour and breth all heuenly, she shall neyther saie nor do any thing that is not full of holynes, and that mate be exaumple for yonger folkes to take heede of. Than as Gorgyas (the Rhetorician) saieth, hir name shall begynne to spynge and be knowen, whan hir person is vnknowen, than hir lyke, holyly passed before, shall begynne to appere: than in deede a vertuous woman shall rule hir husbande by obeysance, and shall brynge to passe, that hir husbande shall haue hir in great auctoritee, whiche afore tymes hath lyued euer vnder hir husbandes rule. Archyppa, wyfe vnto Themistocles, by diligent obedience vnto hir husbande, obtained of hym suche loue, that he againe, whan he was the moste wyse and moste noble man, yet folowed he his wyues mynde, almooste in euery thynge: and there of raine this facion of argument, whiche in bordes was common amonge the Grekes: what some euer this childe will, they ment

The=

Theophantus Themistocles sonne, whom the mother loued tenderly, than argued they thus: what someuer this chylde wyll, the mother wyll: what so euer the mother wyll, Themistocles wyll: and what someuer Themistocles wyll, all the citee of Athens will: and what so euer the citee of Athens wyll, all Grece wyll.

¶ Our lorde commaunded Abraham, to take hede vnto Saras wordes, because she was aged, and past the lust of the body. Wherfore she wold not counsaile hym any chyldysche thyng, or that he neded to be ashamed of, by ỹ reson of hir wanton body. Therfore whan a wife cometh vnto this estate, and al hir childzen maried, and hir selfe ryd out of worldly busines: than let hir loke to ỹ ground with hir body, yelding it vnto the grounde, but with hir minde behold the heauen, whether hir minde shuld sit, and lyfte vp all hir senses, hir thought, and all hir mynde vnto god, and prepare and applye hir selfe hollye to hir iourney, nor thynke nothynge, but that pertayneth vnto hir iourney, whiche draweth towarde. But let hir be wise, lest in steade of holines, she fal in superstition, by the reason of ignorance: Let hir be muche in holy woorkes: howe be it, yet trust more vpon the mercy and the goodnes of god, nor trust not on hir selfe, as though by the reason of hir woorkes, she might come thether, as she intendeth, rather than by the benefyte and gyfte of god. And whyles hir herte is lustyer than hir body, leaue some of hir bodily labour, and labour more with hir mynde. Lette hir praye more and more intentyuely: let hir thynke often of god, and more feruently, fast les, and werp hir selfe lesse with walkynge aboute vnto churches. It is no nede to minysche hir aged body, and forsake hir nourisshynge. Let hir doo

good vnto other, by geuynge theim good counſaile. Lette hir dooe them good alſo with exaumple of hir life, of the whiche commoditee a great parte ſhall retourne vnto hir ſelfe.

Hereendeth the ſeconde boke.

THE THYRD BOKE OF THE INSTRVCTION OF A CHRISTEN VVOMAN.

Of the mournyng of widowes. The firſt Chap.

A GOOD VVOMAN, whan hir huſbande is deade, ought to knowe, that ſhe hath the greatteſt loſſe and damnage that can bechaunce hir in the worlde, and that there is taken from hir the hert of mutuall and tendre loue towarde hir: and that ſhe hathe loſte not onely the one halfe of hir owne lyfe (as lerned men were wonte to ſaie, whan they had loſte theym whome they loued derely) but hir ſelfe alſo to be taken frome hir ſelfe all together and periſſhed. Of this cauſe maie come honeſt weepynge, ſorowe and mournynge with good occaſion, and waylynge, not to blame. It is the greatteſt token that can be of an harde herte and an vnchaſt mynde, a woman not to wepe for the deathe of hir huſbande. Howe bee it there be two kyndes of women, whiche in mournyng for their huſbandes, contrary wayes dooe bothe a miſſe: That, is both thei that mourne to much, and thoſe that mourne to littell. I haue ſeene ſome women no more

moued

moued with the death of their husbandes, than it had been but one of lyght acqueintance, that had dyed: whiche was an euident sygne but of colde loue vnto their husbandes. Whiche thyng is so foule, that none can bee moze abhominable, noz moze cursed. And if a man aske theim, why they do so, oz rebuke theim, they answere agayne, the nature of the countrey so requireth. And the same excuses lay they foz them, that vse to put the cause of theyz vices in some planet, oz qualities of the ayze oz erthe, where they dwell. But the nature of the countrey is cause of no vices. Foz than the countrey ought to be punisshed, and not the offendours. We take no vice of the heauen, oz ayze, but of our owne maners. Foz vnder euery skye is bothe good liuing and yll. Noz there is no countrey so wzetched in the wozlde, that it ne hath some good people there in: noz none so good, but it hath some nought.

¶ I haue saied here afoze, that I haue seene some, nothyng moued with the death of their husbandes. Likewyse, I haue seene some, that wolde with a tyght good will haue quitte their housbandes lykes with theyz owne. Wherfoze there is no reason, why they shulde lay theyz faultes in the condicion of the Region. Foz in the countrey, that is called Getica, the ayze is colde, and yet saieth Pomponius Mela, that the very women lacke no stomacke to dye on the bodyes of theyz husbandes, and haue a speciall desyze to be buryed with them. And bycause that the custome is there to mary many women vnto one man, there is great striuynge amonge theim, whiche shall haue the pzaise therin, of theim that shall geue the iudgement. The victozy is geuen to most vertuous: and it is a great pleasure to them

that maie optayne it. Lykewyse great lerned men write, that women vse to dooe in Indie.

¶ Also in olde tyme the women of Almayne, frome whens the Flandrians toke their originall and fyrste beginnyng, maryed neuer but of maydes: and so made an ende of all hope and desyre of maryage at ones. For they toke one housebande as one body and soule, and neuer desyred, nor thought of maryage after hym: as though they loued the matrymony it selfe, and not the husbandes. Wherby nowe thou maiest se, that vertues and maners be chaunged with aboundaunce, ryches, and pleasures, and the euyll fyre of ryches quencheth the good fyre of charitee. All the lawe of Christe soundeth none other thynge, but charitee, loue and heate.
Luc. 12. For our lorde saieth: I am comen to caste fyre into the erthe, and go about nothyng so muche as to make it to bourne. But whan we couple the ryche diuell to poore Christe, and vnto sobre vertue, reuell and dronkennes, vnto chaste sadnes, desolute and wanton pleasures, paganise and hethenes vnto Christianitee, and the diuyll to god: than god disdeignyng suche felowship, taketh his gyftes from vs, and leaueth vs the gyftes of the diuel. Not withstanding, it maie so chance, that there be in womens myndes suche constaunce stedfastnes, that they maie comfort them selfe: and though they be ouercome and oppressed, maie by wysedome yet recouer agayne. That wolde I greatly praise in a man, but in suche a frayle kynde, it is no good token to haue so passyng great wysedome.

¶ I haue heard of great wise men, that haue taken very heuily the death of but light frendes, and wepte for them habundantly. Solon, whiche made the lawes of the

the people of Athenes, one of the.vii. wise men, commaũ ded his own burial to be kept with weping and wailing, that his frendes might shewe how much thei loued him.

¶ Also after that Lucretia was slayne in Rome, whan Junius Brutus, whiche was reuengear of hir deathe and rape, done by the kynges son: had dryuen the kynges out of Rome, and warre was made againste the kynge: In the fyrst settyng togyther, this Brutus was kylde, and the wiues of the citee mourned a twelue moneth the death of hym, that had ben the defender of their chastitee. And yet mourned they, but an other womans husbande, and because he defended an other womans chastitee. Than howe muche more oughtest thou to mourne the deathe of hym, that is the defender of thyne owne chastitee, sauer and keper of thy body, father and tutour of thy children, welthe of thy house, householde, and thy goodes, ye and more to, thy gouernor and lorde And thou woldest wepe in dede, if thou shuldest not departe richer frome hym, than thou camest to hym. But nowe the ioye of money taketh awaie all the grefe of the sorowe. Thou woldest wepe for his death, if thou haddest loued hym, whan he was on lyue. But nowe thou arte not sorie for his departyng, whom thou settedst nothyng by, whan thou haddest hym.

¶ Also many be glad, that theyr husbandes bee gone, as who were ryd out of pocke and bondage: and they reioyse that they bee out of dominion and bonde, and haue recouered theyr lybertee: but they be of a foolysche opinion. For the shyppe is not at lybertee, that lacketh a gouernour, but rather destitute: neyther a chylde that lacketh his tutour, but rather wandryng without ordre and reason. Nor a woman, whan hir housbande

bande is gone: For than she is in deede Vidua (as she is called) a wydowe, that is to saie, desarte and desolate. Than is she in deede tost at all auentures, as a shyppe, lackyng a maister, and is caryed without discreacion and consyderacion, as a chylde whan his ouerseer is out of the waie.

¶ Here paraduenture some woulde saie, He was suche an husbande, that better were to be without hym, than to haue him. But so wolde neuer good woman saie, nor yll kepe in. For if he were of the beloued, as the lawes of god do commaunde, he shulde be, that is to saie, as he were thy selfe: thou woldest be as sorie that he shuld die as thy selfe. Unto anyll woman, excepte hir husbande leat hir haue hir lybertee to all vices that hir mynde lyeth to, he is intollerable. But vnto a good woman, no husbande can bee so yll, that she ne had leauer haue his lyfe than his deathe.

¶ But what shoulde I speake muche of this mattier? I haue shewed enoughe in the boke afore, that she is neyther woorthy the name of a good woman nor wyfe, that can not loue hir husbande with all hir herte as hir selfe. O circumspecte nature, or rather god, the mooste wyse maister of all good maners. There is no kynde of vertue, but he hath created some lyuyng thing that vseth it, for to reprehende, and reproue those that dispise that vertue: as bees by their crafte reproue the lewdnes of them, that can nothing do: And the faithfulnes of dogges, dampneth the vntrustynes of false people: shepe condempne fraudes and gyles with theyr symplenes: stockdoues and turtuls geue exaumple of true and faithfull loue, in marryage. For those byrdes, as Aristotle saith, lyue content with one male, nor take

none

none other. The turtle doue, whan hir male is deade, neyther drynketh lycoure, nor syteth on the grene tree, ne cometh amonge none of hir felowes playynge and spoztynge togyther. These chaste and holy loues meaneth Salomon, whan he calleth his spouse to hym, saiynge: The voyce of a turtle doue is harde in our realme: And compareth his spouse some tymes to a turtell, and sometyme to a stockedoue. Cant. 2.

¶ Also they that can haue no measure in their weppynge and mournyng, be as farre to blame on the other syde. For whan they bee newely wounded with the chaunce, they confounde and fyll all the place full of cryng, and teare theyr heare, beate theyr breastes, and scratche their chekes, and knocke theyr heades to the walles, and theyr bodyes to the grounde, and drawe forth longe the tyme of theyr mournyng, as in Sicill, Asia, Grece, and Rome: in so muche, that the senate was faine to make statutes and lawes, whiche were called the lawes of the twelue tables, for to modyfie and appease the mournynge. And therefore the apostle also, whan he wrote to this people, was compelled to comforte theim, saiynge: Bretherne, I wolde ye shulde haue knowlage of those that slepe, that ye be not sorie and pensyke, lyke other people that haue no faythe. For if we beleue that Jesus is deade, and reuyued againe: so shall god lyke wyse bryng againe with him all that be deade by hym. ¶ Nowe a wydowe, let hir bewayle hir husoande with hertie affection, and not crie out, nor vexe not hir selfe with dasshynge of hir handes, neyther beatynge of hir body: but lette hir so mourne, that she remembre soberne nes and measure, that other maie vnderstande hir sorowe, without hir owne bostyng and vtteraunce. And

after that the firste bront of hir sorowe is past and swaged, than leat hir begynne to study for consolacion.
¶ Nowe here will I not bryng foorthe preceptes out of the longe volumes of philosophers. For my purpose is to instructe a Christen woman with Christes philosophie: in comparison of whome, all mans wisedome is but folye. My mynde is to serche a remedy. Let vs remembre the saiyng of the apostle, that they whiche slepe with Jesu, shall be brought of god with Jesu agayne. wherfore we ought to be of good coumforte. And she that is a wyse woman, lette hir remembre, that all men bee borne, and lyue in this lawe and condicion, to paie they? dutie vnto nature, as they? creditour, whan so euer she asketh it, of some soner, of some later, howe be it all be conteigned within the common lot and rate, to be borne, and lyue, and die. But our soules be immortal, and this lyfe is but a departynge into an other eternall lyfe and blessed, to them that haue passed well and vertuously this temporall and transitorie life. The whiche thynge the Christen faythe maketh easie enoughe, not by our desarte and merite, but of his goodnes, the whiche with his deathe losed vs frome the bandes of deathe: and death of this lyfe is but as a saiyng out of the sea into the hauen. They that die, go afore, and we shall soone come after: and whan we be departed and losed out of this body, shal leade our life in heauen vnto that time, that euery man shal receiue his owne body againe: howe be it not so comberous and heauie as it is nowe, but lightly couered and arated: with it we shall haue blessed and euerlastyng lyfe.
¶ This is the true and sure christian consolacion, whan they that be a lyue thynke and truste, that they? frendes

frendes, whiche are deade, be not separate from theim. but onely sent before into the place, where within shorte space after they shall mete together full merily, if they will do their diligence, that they maie by the exercise of vertues come thether, as they beleue that they be gone. ¶ These thynges ought christen prestes to shewe and tell vnto ponge widowes, and comforte their heuy mindes with these consolacions, and not as many do, drinke to theim in the funerall feast, and byd them be of good chere, saiyng: They shall not lacke a newe husbande, and that he is prouided of one for hir all redy, and such other thynges as they cast out at banquettes and festes, whan they be well wette with drynke.

¶ Of the buriyng of hir husbande. The. ii. Chap.

ALso amonge many other thynges that we vse after the example of the pagans, this is one, to kepe the burial with great solemnitee. For the pagans and gentils beleued, that if the body were vnburyed, the soule shulde haue great peyne in hell, and that the royaltee and ceremonyes of buriyng, shulde be an honour bothe to them and theyr successours. Not withstanding, there were some of them, that counted these but fantasies, and vanities. For Virgyll in the person of Anchises, whome he induseth for an exaumple of wysedome, saieth, that the losse of sepulture is but a small thynge. And Lucane in this maner saieth:

Nature in hir quiet lap dooeth all thynge receiue,
He is couered with the skye, that hath no graue.

¶ Also wyse philosophers, as Diogines, Theodorus, Senec, and Cicero, but in especiall Socrates, byd proue by great reasons, that it forced not where the car-

cas became and rotted. Marcus Amilius, whiche was the chiefe of the senate of Rome, commaunded his sonnes, a littell before he departed out of the worlde, to cary hym out on a bere apoynted without any shetes or purple, nor shulde spende vpon any other solemnities beside, past .x.s. for he said: The corses of noble men were commended by their owne noblenes, and not by coste of money. Valerius Publicola, and Agrippa Menenius, the one beynge banisshed of the kynges, and restorer of the common libertee, the other broker and arbytrator of the cõmon peace, and many other mo excellent men dyd vtterly dispise the royaltee of sepulture: in so muche that whan they had been in great auctoritee and ryches, yet they lefte not behynde theim so muche as to hyre an ouer sear, of the funerall with. And if they had counted so greatte goodnes, in burynge, as the people supposed, they wolde sure haue sene therunto.

¶ Nowe I will speake of our martyrs of the Chrystyan fayth, whiche cared not, where their deade bodyes lay, so that the soules fared well. For Christe, what tyme he shall restore the soules to the bodyes, shall easily fynde in his house, whiche he knoweth well enough, the least asshes of the body. Saynt Augustine in the boke that he named the Citee of god, in the first, saieth: All these busynes, as keppyng of the corse, and order of the sepulture, and royalties of the funerall, be rather the consolacions of them that lyue, than any ease to the deade. For if solemne burieyng might helpe an euil man any thyng, than shulde poure burieyng or els none at all, hynder, a good man: but we se farre contrary, nor the greatte royaltee of sepulture dyd not ease the peyne of the riche

man

man, ſpoken of in the goſpell: nor it was no rebuke to the lazar man, that his bodye laie on the erthe abiecte and naughte ſet by. For afterwarde the ryche man was puniſſhed in hell for his yll liuyng, and the lazar was refreſſhed in the lap of Abraham, and had his rewarde for his lyfe innocently and vertuouſly ſpente. Luc.19.

¶ Neither I wolde not that ſepulture ſhulde be put awaie. For holy fathers, as Abraham, Iſac, and Jacob, and Joſephe, whan they dyed, commaunded moche of their buriyng. And Tobias was prayſed of the angell of god, becauſe he had buryed deade people But all the ornamentes of ſepultures ought to go to the profet of them that be deade, and not to theim that lyue. For he that is deade, muſt make his rekenynge to god onely, whiche reioyſeth of the merytes of theim that be deade, dooen before in their lyues, and of the clene and pure myndes of theim that be alyue. There is no ſhewe of riches nor pryde pleaſaunt to hym, but holle truſte and hope in hym, and charitee with thyne euen Chriſten. For if thou geue almes, thou ſhalte haue almys: and if thou be mercyfull, thou ſhalte receyue mercy. Therfore make frendes to thy ſelfe and to thy louers, that are deade with thy worldly treaſure that thou mayſte fynde in the other lyfe them that ſhall receyue the into eternall herbarowe. For our lord in the goſpell geueth paradiſe to them, that geueth the workes of mercy: and denieth it to theim, that denye the workes of mercye. Also he teacheth the wayes of geuyng almes, that thou geue none of thy gooddes to theim that be of great habilitee, and maie quite the, or do a better tourne for the agayne: but geue to poore folkes and beggars, that be not able to dooe as muche Tob.12. Luc.19.

for the agayne: and so thou shalte haue great rewarde of god. Than howe muche is it better to clothe poore straungers, than thy ryche kynsfolkes, and poore laye men, than ryche prestes: and that that is spended on waxe and costly sepultures, to be bestowed on poore wydowes, and fatherles children, and suche as lacke: And muche surer and more plentuous aduauntage shal come hereof. And in the date of thy wepyng, thou shalte remembre them that euer wepe, beyng oppressed with necessitee: their teares shall folowe thyne: their myrthe shal chere the. Thy frende that is deade shal finde them attourneis and aduocates, moste pleasant to the iudge eternall, to pleade his matter, and beas diligent in his peryll, as in their owne.

Nowe it appereth well enoughe, what I iudge of those wydowes, that disceyue their creditours of their payment, to bryuge forthe their husbandes roially, or els do not accomplisshe and perfourme the will and bequestes of the deade man, whiche thynge ought to bee dooen specially.

I nede not to declare here, how much men be bounde to the paiyng of their dettes, nor howe muche the fulfillyng of testamentes ought to be regarded. For the true and durable honoure of the corse standeth in mennes hertes, and not in the pompe of sepulture, or tombes of marble and mettall, costly wrought. For men sate well by the buriyng of a good man be it neuer so poore: and prate for hym, and curse sumptuous tombes, and that the more spituously, if the money bee yll gotten that it was made with.

Of

Of the mynding of hir husbande. The.iii. Chap.

Let the wydowe remembre, and haue styll before hir eies in hir mynde, that our soules dooe not perysshe togyther with the body, but bee losed of the bondes of our corporall grossenes, and be lyghtned frome the hourden of the body, and that deathe is nothynge, but a separacion of the soule from the body, and that the soule departeth not so from the body into an other lyfe, that it clearely geueth ouer our mattiers here in this worlde, and they haue been ofte tymes harde of theim that were on lyue, and they knowe muche of our actes and fortunes by the shewynge of aungels, that goe betwene. Wherfore a good wydowe oughte to suppose, that hir husbande is not vtterlye deade, but lyuethe bothe with lyfe of his soule, whiche is the veraie lyfe, and besyde with hir remembraunce. For our frendes lyue with vs, thoughe they be absent from vs or deade, if the lyuely image of theim be imprinted in our hertes, with often thynkynge vpon theim, and daiely renewed, and their lyfe euer wareth fresshe in our myndes. And if we forgette theim, than they die towarde vs. The bretherne of Valeria Messalina, that was Sulpicius wyfe, asked hir, after hir husbandes deathe (because she was yet in the flowers of hir youthe, and helthfull of bodye, and therto goodly of beautie) whether shee woulde mary againe: Nay verely saied she: for Sulpicius is styll alyue to me. And this was the saiynge of a pagane, not assured of the eternall lyfe. Than what shoulde a christen woman dooe? Let hir kepe the remembraunce of hir husbande with reuerence, and not with weppynge: and let hir take for a solempne and

a great

a great othe, to swere by hir husbandes soule, and let hir liue and dooe so, as she shall thynke to please hir husbande, beynge nowe no man but a spirite purified, and a diuine thyng.

¶ Also let hir take him for hir keper and spy, not onely of hir deedes, but also of hir conscience. Leat hir handle so hir house and householde, and so bryngе vp hir children, that hir husbande maie be glad, and thynke that he is happie to leaue suche a wyfe behynde hym.

¶ And lette hir not behaue hir selfe, so that his soule haue cause to be angry with hir, and take vengeaunce on hir vngratiousnes. Cyrus the elder kyng of Perse, whan he dyed (as Xenophon writeth) commaunded his sons to kepe his memorie with deuocion and purenes, for cause of the honour of the god immortall, and the worshyp and the immortalitee of his soule.

¶ Lette, the wydowe make an ende of weppng, leaste we shoulde seeme to mourne for our folkes, that are departed, as thoughe we counted theim cleane deade, and not absente.

¶ Of the chastitee and honestie of a wydowe. The.iiii. Chap.

1.Cor.9. IN geuyng instruction to a christen woman, whome maie a man dooe better after, than sainct Paule, that saied, he was all thynge to all men: to the entent that he myght wynne theim to Christe: and putteth in his owne laude and praise the busynes of all churches: so he, writynge to the Corinthies, saieth on this maner:

2.Cor.7. Lette syngle folkes applye theim selfe to the busynes of our lorde, howe they maie please hym: and leat maryed folkes take heede of worldly mattiers, howe they maie please and contente theyr spouses. For it is conuenient,

that

that the wife be all at hir husbandes will, and that a single woman geue hir selfe holly to Jesu Christe, whiche is spouse of all good and vertuous women.

¶ Therefore than lette passe all that trymmynge and arraynge of hir bodye, whiche whan hir husbande lyued, myghte seeme to bee dooen for his pleasure: but whan he is deade, all hir lyfe and all hir apparelle muste bee disposed and ordered after his wyll, that is successour vnto hir husbande, that is immortall god vnto mortall man. Therfore muste onely the mynde be pyked and made gaye: for that onely is it, that Christe maryeth, and in the whiche Christe resteth and delyteth. but those that intende to mary, tyre and trymme vp theim selfe. And that that I haue saied before of maydes, maie bee applied to this place: yet muche lesse it becometh a wydowe to garnysshe hyppe and peyncte hir selfe: whiche shoulde not onely seke for no bargaine, but rather refuse theim offred: neyther take any offers, but sore agaynste hir wyll, and compelled to the seconde maryage, if she be a good woman. Howe be it in a mayde goodly rayment maie be more suffered, but in a wydowe it is to be discommended. For what body woulde not abhorre hir, that after hir fyrste husbandes deathe, sheweth hir selfe to longe after an other, and casteth awaie hir spouse Christe, and maryeth the dyuill fyrste, and synst man, beyng bothe wydowe, wife, and auouterer: But they haue bothe a more easy state and condicion, and more ouer better, that shewe theyr wydowheade in theyr clothyng, and behauyng of their body and maners. For they that be neuer so vngracious, yet haue a fauour to theim that be good and honest: and by suche tokens as they se in them, cast, if they

shulde marie with them: and chaunce to die afore them, what maner of wydowe thei shulde leaue behynde them. For I ensure you, there is no husbande, that woulde not haue his deathe mourned of his wyfe, and be hym selfe desired of hir, and missed: and seeyng that we haue suche preceptes for maryed folkes, bothe of philosophers, and the apostels, what shoulde we thynke that theyr iudgemente was of wydowes? By whome the apostle Paule writeth to Timothy on this maner: A veraie wydowe and desolate woman trusteth in god, and is in praier daie and nyghte: and shee that is delycate and easefull, is deade, ye beyng on lyue. Therefore byd them kepe them frome blame. For they seeme to lyue in the syght of those that see them eate and drinke, and go and speake, and do other woorkes of lyfe. But and one coulde perse with his syghte into theim, or entre within the secreates of theyr mindes and thoughtes, he shoulde see that poore synfull soule, howe it is putte frome god, and spoiled and depriued of his life. Thus sainct Paule saieth, Thus sainct Hieronime, Thus sainct Ambrose, Thus sainct Augustine, Thus al sainctes and holy men with one voyce and opinion saie, That weepyng, and mournyng, solitarines, and fastyng, be the moste precious dowries and ornamentes of a wydowe. 1.Tim.5.

Moreouer what feastes, what plaies and daunces a wydowe shulde vse, sainct Paule dothe shewe, whan he byddeth hir bee in prayer daie and nyghte: and so whan hir mortall husbande is deade, she myghte bee at more lybertee with the immortall, and more by leasure, and ofter talke with hym, and more pleasauntly, yea and to saie more plainly, a wydowe ought to praie more intentyfely and ofter, and faste longer, and bee

muche

muche at masse and preachyng, and rede more effectually, and occupie hir selfe in the contemplacion of those thynges, that maie mende hir liuyng and maners.

¶Anna, the doughter of Phannuell, comen of the tribe of Aser, whiche lyued with hir husband seuen yere after hir mariage, and whan she had been widow fourscore yere and foure, our lorde Christe founde hir in the temple, out of the whiche she had neuer departed, but euer in fastyng and prayer daye and nyght. And in dede I wolde haue greatter vertue and perfection in a wydowe, than in a wyfe. For the wyfe must apply hir selfe to the will of hir mortall husbande, to whom she is maried, but the wydowe hath taken Christe to hir husband immortall. Wherfore it is reason, that all thyng be more excellent and accordyng for suche a spouse, and wordes more sad and sobre. For the communicacion of euery body is lyghtly a glasse and a myrrour of the mynde and condicions of theim. For it is an olde prouerbe: Suche as the life is, suche is the communicacion. And foule and vncleane speche hurteth the minde. Ill speche corrupteth good condicions, as saint Paule saieth, after the wordes of the poet Menander. ¶I woulde that a wydowe shoulde not onely speake suche wordes as might shewe hir selfe chaste and honest, but also that myght instruct the herars with learnynge, and amende theym with example of hir liuyng. For mankynd hath speache to couple wisedome and vertu together: and though it seme to do no more but vtter the thought of the mynde, yet doth it cause bothe lernyng and vertue. Luc. 2. 1. Cor. 15.

¶And though a woman be losed out of the bandes of worldely matrimony, lette hir not yet thynke that shee maie dooe what hir lust. For often tymes wydowes do

shewe what they haue been in mariage, and vnder the libertee of widowhead, open and shewe that whiche thei kept in before for feare of their husbandes. As vyces, whan they bee out of their cages, by and by tourne to their olde condicions. Lykewise many women shew out at ones the vices that they dissembled (so as they coulde whyle that their husbandes lyued) after that the lettes that they had of their husbandes bee taken awaie. For than shall it be knowen, what nature or condicion a woman is of, whan she maie doo what she wyll. And as sayncte Hieronime saieth, she is chast in dede, that maie doo yuell and shee lyst, and wyl not. Therefore a woman had nede to worke more warely, whan bothe the dispraise of vices, and the prayse of vertue is imputed to hir selfe. For as longe as hir husbande lyued, he had a great parte of bothe.

¶ In the wydowhead Christe hir spouse wyll lightly helpe hir that will lyue vertuously. And if we doo any thynge well, we ought to thanke hym therefore: and if we dooe yl, it is to be referred to our selfe. and as a man hath all his ioye in his wyfe, if she be good, in lykewyse no man can beleue howe pleasant and amiable she is to Christe, that plaieth the wydowe in dede, that is to saie, the whiche beyng desolate in this life, hath all hir hope and trust, and all hir ioye and delyte in Christe. And suche sayut Paule commaundeth to the bisshoppes to haue in regarde: for by their prayer the churche obtayneth many thynges of Christe. For suche a one deserued to bee one of the firste that sawe Christe in the temple, and to prophesie of hym to them that were present. Suche a wydowe is praysed by the mouthe of god, and is commended to vs by his worde. For he saieth by Esaie

1. Timo. 5.

Luc. 2.

saie: Geue iudgement for the fatherles childe, and iustifie the widow. And againe he saith: Thou shalt not hurt a widowe, or a childe that is vnder age. For if thou hurt them, thei shall crye to me, and I shall here their cryng, and shalbe displeased, and strike the with the sword, and your wiues shalbe widowes, & your children fatherles. Exod. 22.

¶ Howe they shall behaue them selfe at home. The. v. Chap.

NOt withstandyng that holye men wolde widowes shulde be oft in the churche, and styl in prayer, yet they dyd not vtterly forbyd them worldly busines. For saynt Paule saith of widowes, writyng vnto Timothe: If any widowe haue children, or childers children, let hir first lerne to handle hir owne house vertuously, and doe for hir progenitours agayne. 1. Tim. 5.

¶ Let the widow teache this, let the children lerne this, that is, to behaue them selfe lowly and louyngly to their fathers and mothers, graundfathers and graundmothers. For we se it chaunceth oft tymes, that they that be brought vp with a wydowe, by the meanes of hir ouer muche sufferance and cherisshyng, be stubborne and inobedient to them, whom they shuld obeye: in so much that in some countreys, and in especiall in myne, it is vsed in a common prouerde, to cal them widowes Cockneis, that be yll brought vp children, and that be selfe wylde, and vnthriftie ponge men. Therfore I wolde counsaile a ponge woman, beyng a wydowe, to put the bringynge vp of hir children vnto some good and sad man. For she is so blynded with the loue of theim, that she thynketh shee dealeth hardly with theim, whan shee maketh of theim most. Howe be it some haue been great wyse women, and haue brought vp their children bothe

very well and wysely: As Cornelia, that brought vp Gracchus hir sonne: and Veturia, whiche brought vp Martius Coriolane: in so muche that what noble acte so euer he dyd in the common welthe, eyther at home or frome home, he was euer incited with this thynge, that he myght do so, that it might be alowable to his mother that had brought hym vp. But howe children shulde be brought vp, I haue taught in the boke afore. Therfore let the widowe loke there what so euer maketh for this purpose. And as for their housholde, the apostle afore saied, writeth of it, If any widowe do not se to hir owne frendes specially, she denieth hir faythe, and is worse than an infidell. Yet lest she be to homely, to put hir selfe in presse, in company of hir seruauntes, namely if shee be yonge, lette hir here what sayntе Hieronime saieth writyng vnto Saluina: Chastitee (saieth he) in women is a bryttell thynge, and lyke a goodly flower that wydereth and drieth with a littel wether, and a small blast: and namely if the age be apte to vice, and the auctorite of the husbande lackyng, whose spirite is the defender of the wyfe. What shuld a widowe do among a great numbre of men seruauntes, whiche I wolde not shee shulde set at nought, as bondmen, but abasshe and regarde as men? How be it if she haue a great house, that requireth muche mans seruice, let hir make some well aged man rular, that is sad and discrete, and of good condicions, whose honestie shalbe his maistres worship, For I haue knowen many, that haue shutte vp theyr doores, and haue not comen abrode, and yet haue had an yll name with their owne seruauntes, whom ouer gorgious apparel of the seruāt hath caused to be suspected, or els the welfare and good likyng of his body, or age

apte

apte for pleasure, or pride, or highe mynde, by the reason that he knewe he was loued of his maistres: whiche loue, though it be well hyd, yet many times it appereth, whan he dispiseth his felowes, as they were his bondmen. These be the wordes of sainct Hieronime: vnto the whiche I adde this moreouer, That best is for a wydow to mynisshe hir householde, in especiall of men, and to take vnto hir some well aged woman, wise and vertuous, with whom she maie leade hir lyfe: and aske counsaile of hir in suche matters as pertaine to women. And if she be aged hir selfe, let hir take to hir some olde man, that is some kynsman of hirs, or of hir alyance, whome she maie truste vnto.

¶ And fynally, lette hir euer vse the counsaile of that man, that she knoweth hath good witte, and woulde hir profyt, and is trustie. The olde Romains wold, that the women shoulde euer be vnder the rule of their fathers, and brotherne, and husbandes, and kynsmen.

¶ Lette hir dwelle rather with hir mother in lawe, or hir husbandes alyaunce and kynsfolkes, than with hir owne, bothe for the remembraunce of hir husbande, for whose sake it maie appere, that she loueth better his kyn and his bloude, than hir owne. And in as muche as she is translated into that kinred, vnto the whiche she hath borne children, or at the least wise shuld haue done. Moreouer, the discipline of chastitee is rekened more streicte amonge alyance and kynsfolkes: because there is lesse cherysshyng and lybertee. But a vertuous woman will not be so muche moued with all these thynges, as with the remembraunce and loue of hir husbande. For so Antonia, daughter vnto Marcus Antonius the iudge, wyfe vnto Drusus, ledde all hir lyfe with hir

mother

mother in lawe. Lykewise Liuia lefte hir house and hir countreye to dwelle with hir mother in lawe Noemy. Excepte there be with hir mother in lawe some nyce and wanton yonge men, that maie cause a blotte in hir good name, or put hir chastitee in ieoperdy: or except the women that be hir alians, be not of all the beste fame: for than it is more wisedome to go to hir owne kinsfolkes.

¶ Howe thei shall behaue them selfe foorth. The. vi. Chap.

OTher whyles they shall haue causes to go abrode: Therfore let them go couered, and shewe in deede, what theyr name meaneth. For the name of a wydowe in Greke and Latin is as much to saie as desolate and destitute. wherfore there is muche difference betwene one goyng alone, & accompanied with men. And seyng that so great sadnes of behauour and raiment is required in a wyfe, than what ought to be considered in a wydowe? She ought to shewe example vnto other, both of chastitee, sobernes, and honestie. And seyng that they ought to geue example to other, howe can it do well, that they shulde go forthe appointed in that armour of the diuel, both to shew the pompe and vanitee of their own mind, and set the snares of Satanas in stede of the example of Christe: wherfore sainct Ambrose saieth full well, that with mourning garmentes, and sad and demure lokes, wanton and nyce lokes be kept vnder, and vnlauful lustes quenched. The surest is not to go much abrode: and whã she goth, to be cõpanied wt some good & sad woman. ¶ Let hir seche to no churches, where as is resorte, but where as no body is, and where no occasions is of trespassyng, and good quietnes and occasion of prayeng. ¶ Let hir not kepe muche company with friers and prestes

tis. For the diuell is craftie, and by longe vse hath learned by what craft euery body maie be ouercomen. And if he haue opportunitee, he wil soone bring his purpose to passe: for he hath none other thyng to occupie hym selfe with. If a wydow wold aske any counsaile, let hir chose some aged man, that is past the lust of the worlde, nor is infected with any vices, nor is set vpon couetousnes, nor will set his minde on flatterie for hope of vantage or lucre of money, and that is well learned, by muche experience hath gathered great wisedome, that he neither kepe hir mind streicter than nede is, nor let hir haue ouer muche the bridle of libertee, nor dothe counte nothing more precious nor deare than trouth and vertue: let hir what so euer she doubteth shewe to hym, and be aknowen to none other bodie. Sainct Hieronime writeth to Eustachium, and geueth hir suche maner counsaile. If thou doubt any thyng of scripture, or be ignorant in it, aske of hym that is commendable of liuyng, and for his age excusable, nor hath any euill name, and that maie saie, I haue disposed the to one man to yelde a chast virgine vnto Christ. And if there be none that can expounde and declare thy doubtes, it is better to be ignorannt safely, than to knowe with ieoperdie. For in courtes and in resort of men, and gatheryng of people, a wydowe shulde not medle. In the whiche places there is great ieoperdy of those thynges, that a wydowe oughte to set moste by. And a wydowe, that is chast, honest, of good fame, and vertuous, ought to dooe so, that she maie do good, not onely to hir selfe, but also to other folkes. A brode, and afore many mens eies and handlynges, shamfastnes by littel and littel gothe awaie, and honestie and chastitee cometh in ieoperdy: and though thei be not ouercomen,

An yet

yet they be soze assayled. And as for the ouercoming euery man will saie, not as the thyng is in dede, but as he lusteth.

¶ Moreouer, the cares of this worlde coole the loue and desyre of heauenly thinges: and as our lorde saith in the gospel, The sede falleth amonge thornes, that is choked with thoughtes and busines of this present life: neither is suffred to growe vp to good corne. And likewise as a sea, that the winde hath lyen sore vpon, is yet tossed and troubled, after that the winde is layed, and the tempest gone: so mans minde lately comen out of busines of the worlde, yet casteth in his minde and study the same thinges, and panteth after his labour: nor can not after his trouble come streight to it selfe. And whan the minde is troubled, what maner of prayers can be saied? Verely as you māie se, careful and vnquiet sauoring of the mire & dirte of this peuishe worlde: like as whan a riuer or fountain is troubled a mā can draw no water but ful of mud.

Mat. 13. Luc. 8.

Quietnes of mynde.

¶ The quietnes of mynde is that that lyfteth vs vppe hiest vnto the speche of god, as it did mary Magdalene, whiche all mans and worldely busines geuen ouer, sat at the feete of our lorde, diligently hearyng his woorde. Therfore is she commended by the testimonie of Christ, that she had chosen the best parte, the whiche shulde not be taken from hir.

Luc. 10.

¶ But here wolde some saie, My landes be in perill, I am sued. Unto that here the saiyng of sainct Ambrose, Do not complaine, that thou art alone: For chastitee requireth solitarines: and a chast woman desyreth secretnes. But thou hast matters and busines, and fearest the atturney of thine aduersarie, pleadyng before the iudge. But our lorde entreateth for the, saiyng: Geue iudgement

ment for the fatherles childe, and iustifie the widowe. But yet thou woldest kepe thine heritage. The herttage of chastitee is far greatter: the whiche a wydow ought better to kepe than a wife. And if thy seruant offende, forgeue him. For it is better that thou forbeare a others faute, than vtter thine own. Thus saith saint Ambrose.

¶Also I wold thou shuldest vnderstand, that my mind is to haue hir matter the moste tendred of the iudges, that hathe but feble atturneyes, or none at all. For than shall the iudges take on them the roume of atturneis, whan they withstande often tymes mightie defenders and aduocates. For naturally we hate theim that haue great power and riches, and help them that haue littel, and go about to put downe theim that exalt them selfe, and to helpe vp theim, that be humble and lowely.

¶Also it is ordeyned of nature, that in mens opinions, as the wise man saith, in all maner of strifes the greatter shall seme to dooe the wrong, yea though he haue it dooen to hym, because he maie dooe more. And the same that I haue said of iudges, vnderstand me to haue spoken of attourneies: Vnto whom, all the wydowes matter shalbe more credible, whom they se ouer shamfast to defend hir owne quarell: and hir matter shalbe so much more recommended vnto them, the lesse that she recommendeth it. And hir cause shalbe more like to be good, whom men thynke so good and vertuous, that she will neither aske nor holde that is not hir owne.

¶So a good woman shall not bryng with hir to the courte argumentes of pleaders in the lawe, but the autoritee of recorde. And shee that is babblyng, and busy, and troublous, must nedes wery mē, and make them to lothe hir, and hindreth hir of the succour that I spake

ol. And this I haue saied by good iudges and aduocates, or at the least suche as she knoweth not to be yll. For some be nyce and wanton, that they wyll sell their counsaile and iudgementes for their vnthryfty pleasure of their body. Upon whome doutles the common good order and maner wolde take punishement, sayyng that the lawes, as the wise man said, be like the cop webbes, that take all litel beastes, and let the great alone. But a good wydowe, if she knowe that they be suche, as she may well enough by their name that they haue of the people, she shall eschew theim and flee, not only with the losse of hir goodes, but also ieoperdy of hir selfe, if nede were. And the same I wolde she shulde do by all that be wanton and vicious.

¶ Now of rennyng about to other mens houses, sainte Paule hath a precept, that those wydowes ought to be abiect, as mysfamous, that renne ydelly frome house to house: and not onely ydel, but also be babblars and full of woordes, where as is not conuenient. For there be some, whiche whan they thynke theim selfe they haue done all their owne busynes, than without shame they medle with other folkes busines, and geue counsayle, as though they were great sages, and exhort and geue preceptes, rebuke and correcte, pyke fautes, and bee wondrous quycke of syghte frome home, and at home blynde enough.

¶ Of seconde mariage. The. vii. Chap.

For to condemne and reproue vtterly seconde mariages, it were a poynt of heresye. Howe be it that better is to absteine than mary agayne, is not onely counsailed by Chrystyan purenes, that is to saie, by diuine wysedome,

wisedome, but also by pagans, that is to saie, by woꝛldly wisedome. Coꝛnelius Tacitus, as I haue reherſed, sayth: The women of Almayne were not wont to marie but of maides, and though they were widowes in their youth, yet wold thei not marry agayne, and ſpecially the noble women. Valeria, ſyſter vnto Meſſala, and Poꝛtia the yonger doughter of Cato, whan there was prayſed vnto hir, foꝛ hir goodnes, a woman that had be twyſe maryed: Poꝛtia anſwered, An happy and a chaſt dame woulde neuer marie oftner than ones. Coꝛnelia, the mother of Caius and Titus Gracchus, whan ſhe was moued with great pꝛomiſes by Ptolome the king of Egypt to mary agayne, ſhe refuſed, and had leauer be called Coꝛnelia Gracchus wife, than the queene of Egypt.

¶ Alſo ſecond mariages were rebuked in plaies and enterludes, and verſes of poetes in this maner: Oft mariyng can not be without occaſion of repꝛehenſion: And a woman that marieth many, can not pleaſe many. Not withſtanding widowes lay many cauſes, wherfoꝛe thei ſaie thei muſt mary againe: of whom ſaint Hierome ſpeketh in this maner wꝛiting vnto the holy womã Furia. Yong widowes, of whō there hath many gon backward after the diuel, after that thei haue had their pleaſure by mariyng in Chꝛiſte, be wont to ſaie, My gooddes ſpyl daily, the heritage of mine auncetry periſſheth, my ſeruantes ſpeake ſtubburnly & pꝛeſumptuouſly, my maide wyl not do my commaundment, who ſhall go befoꝛe me foꝛthe? who ſhal anſwere foꝛ my houſe rent? who ſhall teache my yong ſonnes? who ſhall bꝛyng vp my yonge doughters? And ſo thei laie that foꝛ a cauſe to mary foꝛ, wiche ſhulde rather let theim from it. Foꝛ ſhe bꝛyngeth vpon hir childꝛen an enemy, and not a noꝛiſſher: not a

father, but a tyran. And she inflamed with vicious lust, forgetteth hir owne wombe: and she that late afore sat mournyng amonge hir children, that perceyue not their owne losse and harmes, nowe is pyked vp a newe wife. Where to layest thou the cause in thyne inheritaunce, and pryde of thy seruauntes? confesse thyne owne viciousnes. For none of you taketh a housband but to the entent that she wyl lie with him, nor except hir lust prick hir. What a ragiousnes is it, to set thy chastitee common lyke an harlot, that thou maist gether riches? And for a vile, and a thyng that shal sone passe awaie, to file thy chastitee that is a thing most precious & euerlasting If thou haue children all redy, what nedest thou to marie? If thou haue none, why dost thou not feare the barennes, that thou hast proued afore: and auenterest vp on an vncertaine thyng, and forgost thine honestee and chastitee that thou wast sure of? Now thou hast writyng of spousage made the, that withi short while after, thou maist be compelled to write a testament. The housband shal feine hym self sicke, and shal do on liue and in good helth, that he wold haue to do whan thou shalt die. And if it chaunce that thou haue children by the second housbande, than riseth strife and debate at home within thy house. Thou shalt not be at libertie to loue thine owne children equally, neither to loke indifferently vpon thē, ẏ thou hast borne: thou shalt reache them meate secretly, he wil enuie him that is deade, & except thou hate thyne owne children, thou shalt seeme to loue their father yet. And if he haue children by a nother wife: than shal plaiers and gesters raile and gest vpon the, as a cruel stepdame. If thy stepsonne be sycke, or his heedhake, thou shalte be diffamed for a wytche: and if thou geue hym

not

not meate, thou shalte be accused of crueltee: and if thou geue any, thou shalt be called a poysoner. What I praie the hath second mariages so plesant, that can be able to recompence these euyls? Thus saieth sainct Hieronime. ¶ As for the praise of continence and chastitee, and cousailyng frome seconde mariages, what can I be able to saie after the eloquent fountaine of sainct Hieronime, or the swete delicates of sainct Ambrose speache? Therfore who so desyreth to knowe any thyng of those mattiers, let hym loke it of theim. For it longeth not to my purpose, to recyte all theyr saiynges here. For I do not intende to write exhortacions vnto any kynde of liuyng, but to geue rules, howe they maie lyue. Neuer the lesse I woulde counsaile a good woman to continue in holy wydowheade, namely if she haue chyldrene: whiche thing is thentent and fruite of matrimonie. But and she doubt, lest she can not auoyde the prickes of nature with that lyfe, lette hir geue an eare vnto sainct Paule the apostle, writyng vnto the Corinthies in this wise: I saie to vnmaryed women and wydowes, it were good for theim, if they kepte theim selfe as I am, but yet if they can not suffre, let them marie. For it is better to marie than bourne. And the same apostle writeth vnto Timothe thus: Put awaie younge wydowes, for whan they haue abused them selfe at large, than wolde they marye to Christ, and are condempned, because thei haue refused theyr fyrst promyse, and walke ydle from house to house neither onely ydle, but trifling and babling, prating and talkyng, suche thynges as be not comely. Therfore I wolde that the yonger shulde marie, and bryng foorthe children, and rule theyr house, and geue theyr ennemy no occasion to saie euill by them. For there be some, whiche

1. Cor. 7.

1. Tim. 5.

streight

streight after their conuersion haue folowed Satanas. Yet let theim beware, that they do it not by and by after their husbandes death. For that is a token that they loued not theim, for whose departing thei haue soone lefte sorowyng, mournyng, and all desire of theim.

¶ And if they muste prouide oughte for theyr house or chyldren, let them se to it before the busynes of mariage and dominion of a newe husbande. And let them get suche husbandes as be accordyng for wydowes to be maryed vnto, not yonge men, wanton, hote, and ful of play, ignorant, and riotous, that can neither rule their house, nor theyr wyfe, ne theyr selfe neither: but take an husbande some thyng paste mydle age, sobre, sadde, and of good wyt, experte with great vse of the worlde: whiche with his wisedome maie kepe al the house in good ordre: whiche by his discrecion maie so temper and gouerne all thyng, that there maie be alwaie at home sobre myrthe and obedience, without frowardnes, and the household kepte in theyr labour and duetie, without peyne, and all thing cleare and holy. And let them wete and know, that these contentes him, whose pleasure onely thei shall all more esteeme, than the hole countreys beside.

Here endeth the boke called the instruction of a Christen woman, whiche who so shall reade, shall haue muche, bothe knowlage, pleasure, and fruite by it.

IMPRESS.

LONDINI in ædibus Thomæ Berth. regij impressoris. CVM priuilegio ad imprimendum solum.

ANNO M.D.XLI.